"A STORY IS A CREATIVE DEMONSTRATION OF TRUTH." — ROBERT MCKEE

SO IS A BUILDING

ARCHITECTURE IS A CHESS GAME OF FORM & STORY WAGED ON THE BATTLEFIELD OF A BUILDING AND ITS SITE

1

The White Army of FORM cries,
"ARCHITECTURE IS THE STAGE SET FOR THE DRAMA OF LIFE."

The Black Army of STORY cries,
"ARCHITECTURE IS A STORY TOLD THROUGH A BUILDING."

THE ARMIES OF FORM & STORY FIGHT THE WAR OF ART | THEY FIGHT FOR OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART

A GREAT BUILDING presents more than the spellbinding production values of a Porsche. More than a breathtaking expression of the aesthetics of materials, space, and light — more than a stunning display of Abstract FORM.

2

Like architecture since the dawn of time, a great building tells a Symbolic STORY.

3

Visual Ef9ects springs from my talk by the same title that I gave in 2016 for the Symposium on Formalism at the Syracuse University School of Architecture Program in Florence, Italy. The book reflects my quest to create a *Significant Architecture*: an architecture of Form & Story that spins a creative tale of Beauty & Truth so well told that we feel an UPWELLING OF AESTHETIC & SYMBOLIC EMOTIONS. Overwhelmed with pleasure and blinded by insight, we find ourselves floored by the transforming power of art.

7

In a building, *everything must be formed*, but a great building, like a great movie, presents more than Form, more than Visual Effects. A great building presents Visual Ef9ects. The "9" stands for Story. Truth.

9

My book presents a manifesto: Build brave.
Build beautiful.
Build the truth.

BOOKS BY JEF7REY HILDNER (aka HENRY TRUCKS, MICHELANGELO A. ROLAND SLATE) **:**

AUTHOR, BOOK DESIGNER, AND PUBLISHER

TOWARD AN ARCHITECTURE AI | 2023

LIVE BRAVE: A Tribute To Laura Middleton
VISUAL EF9ECTS | Architecture and the Chess Game of Form & Story
METAPHYSICAL WARRIOR: Meditations on the art & science of life
DAEDALUS 9 | THE ARCHITECT PAINTER [improv 1.0]
HENRY TRUCKS — Painter : ancient myths meet modern landscapes
MISFITZ BECAUSE: What Doesn't Belong—and Why? Mind-Teasers!
GARCHES 1234 | Remembering the Mathematics of the Ideal Villa: An Essay on Le Corbusier's 1927 Villa de Monzie/Stein
PICASSO LESSONS: The Sixth Woman of Les Demoiselles d'Avignon

CONTRIBUTOR

ARCHITECTURAL FORMALISM, by Hakan Anay—with Rosalind Krauss, Robert Slutzky, Colin Rowe, and Peggy Deamer: Turkish translation of my essay "Formalism: Move | Meaning" (original English version reprinted on pages 718–737 of my book *Visual Ef9ects*)
REMEMBRANCE AND THE DESIGN OF PLACE, by Frances Downing: Drawing from Memory— "Fact and Implication; or, A 397-Word Reflection on an Unpremeditated Drawing"
CONNECTIVE TISSUES: Ten Essays by University of Virginia Kenan Fellows 2001–2016, by Peter Waldman: Epilogue, "LABYRINTH R.U.N."

THE WORLD IN A RECTANGLE—DAEDALUS 9: THE LABYRINTHEUM | HOUSE OF THE HERO'S JOURNEY

VISUAL EFFECTS

THE ARMIES OF FORM & STORY FIGHT THE WAR OF ART | THEY FIGHT FOR OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART

The White Knight of Form

"ALICE WAS BEGINNING TO GET VERY TIRED OF SITTING BY HER SISTER ON THE BANK, AND OF HAVING NOTHING TO DO: ONCE OR TWICE SHE HAD PEEPED INTO THE BOOK HER SISTER WAS READING, BUT IT HAD NO PICTURES OR CONVERSATIONS IN IT, 'AND WHAT IS THE USE OF A BOOK,' THOUGHT ALICE 'WITHOUT PICTURES OR CONVERSATIONS?'"

—LEWIS CARROLL, *ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND*

The Black Knight of Story

VISUAL EFFECTS

THE ARMIES OF FORM & STORY FIGHT THE WAR OF ART | THEY FIGHT FOR OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART

THE ARCHITECT PAINTER PRESS COPYEDITOR LAURA MIDDLETON, of Sacramento, California, exemplified the ideals of service at the heart of this company, which was launched in 2005 under the banner, "Live Brave."

The daughter of a loving but inattentive mother and a kind but absent father, Laura pinballed during childhood from Stillwater, Oklahoma, her birthplace, to lands farther west, Wyoming, Montana, Alaska, even Australia, her kid brother Terry tucked under her arm. She emerged self-reliant, strong, a protector of the weak, and an intrepid lifelong traveler, adversity shaping her character, her brave childhood serving as psychological prelude to her brave adulthood and the life she carved out on the east coast. In the last year of her life, Laura circled back across the country to the soundtrack of Melissa Etheridge's anthem "California": "Raised up on mid-western dreams / . . . I pointed my dreams west / To California / Come rescue me / California / I am almost free." Almost.

Throughout her life, cut short by illness, Laura helped other people. During 35 years of selfless action, inspired leadership, and hard work on behalf of the welfare of others, from Tenacre Foundation in Princeton, New Jersey, to Huru International and The Circle in the Square Theater in New York City, Laura tried to improve people's lives, to lift people up and grace them with encouragement and hope. She loved people. People felt her love and loved Laura right back. Through her poise in the face of tragedy—Terry died at 29 in a railroad accident—through her serenity and courage in the face of her own demoralizing danger, through her independent mind, her staunch support of social justice and human equality, reflected in her radical life choices, Laura walked this earth in tune with the music of her kind soul and brave heart.

An easygoing woman who didn't see herself as an entitled princess but as a sturdy pioneer, Laura was a globe-trotting explorer of exotic places and an inner traveler of outlier ideas. She was a lover of art—music, painting, architecture, literature, movies, theater—and a natural born writer. Blessed with intelligence and humility, she lived true to her "zest for new adventure" and "quest for inner peace."

Laura served this enterprise for seven years not only as copyeditor but also as practical and spiritual consultant, hero, mentor, and loyal friend. And in her loving memory, in her honor, The Architect Painter Press must "press" on, hell-bent on somehow living up to Laura's example of how to truly Live Brave. We begin with this book.

Q.F.B., Laura. | Quest Forward Brave.

LIVE BRAVE.

JEF7REY HILDNER

VISUAL EF9ECTS

THE ARMIES OF FORM & STORY FIGHT THE WAR OF ART | THEY FIGHT FOR OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART

ARCHITECTURE AND THE CHESS GAME OF FORM & STORY

for laura

The Silver Knight of Form & Story

SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

THE ARCHITECT PAINTER PRESS

"I DRAW NO DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE CONSTRUCTION OF A BOOK AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF A PAINTING."
— HENRI MATISSE

VISION QUEST

VISUAL EFFECTS |
Architecture and the Chess Game of Form & Story

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Unless noted otherwise, the author, JEF7REY HILDNER ARCHITECT aka The Architect Painter, created all photographs or directed all photography and created all illustrations, paintings, and other artwork—including buildings, which required a team of special people, from inspired owners and skilled contractors to talented interns, students, and professionals.

This book includes illustrations for two talks that the author presented as a participating scholar in 2016 at the Syracuse University School of Architecture Program in Florence, Italy. Every effort has been made to properly cite the sources of these illustrations and others throughout the book. Chess knight strategy icon on round stainless steel modern industrial button: Len Neighbors © 123RF.com.

BOOK WRITTEN, CREATED, DESIGNED, AND PRODUCED BY JEF7REY HILDNER
IN THE NAME OF ART

AND LOVE

THE ARCHITECT
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"A HERO VENTURES FORTH FROM THE WORLD OF COMMON DAY INTO A REGION OF SUPERNATURAL WONDER:
FABULOUS FORCES ARE THERE ENCOUNTERED AND A DECISIVE VICTORY IS WON:
THE HERO COMES BACK FROM THIS MYSTERIOUS ADVENTURE WITH THE POWER TO BESTOW BOONS ON HIS FELLOW MAN."
—JOSEPH CAMPBELL, *THE HERO WITH A THOUSAND FACES*

for laura

LAURA DAWN MIDDLETON

NOVEMBER 27, 1963 – NOVEMBER 29, 2017

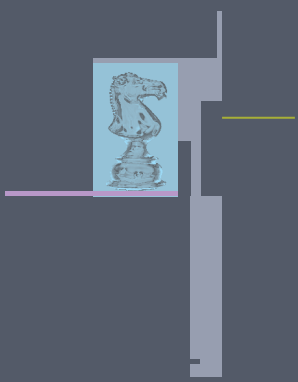
you love to travel, darling
and now you've punched a one-way ticket to worlds beyond earth's horizon

i don't know where you are
. . . the great Architect hasn't rolled out the Floor Plan
but whatever Room in this Cosmic House you now find yourself
—i hope you can still write and dance and dream . . .
and hear melissa etheridge sing "california"

you must fulfill your special destiny, sweetheart—
with zest stay true to your brave quest

so let's trust the Journey, shall we?
carry me in your heart as i carry you in my heart
. . . and wait for me, my love

— slate



"Laura Dawn Middleton: Room 5, Sea Ranch Lodge | View Of Bihler Point," 04.26.2017 8:02 pm

— your silver knight

Laura's passing hurts. Deeply. How much does it hurt? To lose your truelove? This famous scene from the movie *Cast Away* conveys my pain: "I'm sorry, Wilson!" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zaQa4ttlyNo

Chuck Noland, the story's cursed hero, found himself shipwrecked on an island in the middle of nowhere, imprisoned by water, "No land" in sight. His fortune turned when a volleyball washed ashore. He named the volleyball "Wilson," the name of the manufacturer stamped on the ball. Wilson became Chuck's symbolic soul mate who rescued and nourished him psychologically and emotionally during his excruciating ordeal. The way my soul mate, Laura, rescued and nourished me during mine. But then Laura faced her own ordeal. A grave ordeal. And like Chuck, who couldn't save Wilson, I couldn't save Laura. Laura and I were best friends for 35 years, together at last for the final three-and-a-half years of Laura's life. Star-crossed lovers doomed to a tragic fate as old as time.

“WILSON, I’M SORRY! I’M SORRY! WILSON! . . . WILSON!”

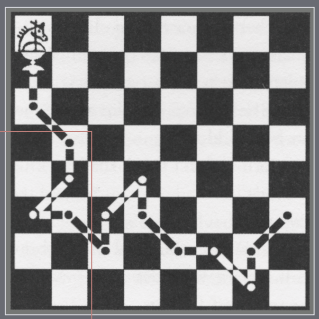
—Screenwriter William Broyles Jr. | Chuck Noland in *Cast Away*

LIVE BRAVE

LAURA . . . MY WILSON . . . MY NORTH STAR

“GREAT ART IS THE OUTWARD EXPRESSION OF AN INNER LIFE OF THE ARTIST, AND THIS INNER LIFE WILL RESULT IN HIS PERSONAL VISION OF THE WORLD.”
—EDWARD HOPPER

“The knight moves in an L-shaped manner, like this:



There are many reasons for the strangeness of the knight’s move, the main one being the conventionality of art . . . . The second reason lies in the fact that the knight is not free—it moves in an L-shaped manner because it is forbidden to take the straight road.”

—Victor Shklovsky, *Knight’s Move*

“Sometimes the correct path is the tortured one.”

—Screenwriters Rajiv Joseph & Scott Rothman, *Draft Day*

ARCHITECTURE IS MY ONE-WORD LIFE THEME—MY NORTH STAR.

This book reflects my quest to follow that star: to create a *Significant Architecture*—an architecture waged on the chessboard of a building and its site between the White Army of Form and Black Army of Story, rising from the heat of battle to spin a courageous tale of Beauty & Truth so well told we feel overwhelmed by bliss and blinded by insight. Form & Story fight to win our mind and soul and heart—through the elixir of a heart-pounding, Aesthetic & Symbolic work of art.

In a building, *everything must be formed*, but a great building, like a great movie, presents more than Form —more than Visual Effects. A great building presents Visual Ef9ects. The silent "9" stands for Story. MYTH. METAPHOR. TRUTH.

TRUTH

Architecture and truth have been intertwined since the moment the first architects—astronomer-priests—looked outward and inward to decipher the architecture of the World and mirror it.

Mary Baker Eddy's *Science and Health* instilled my quest for truth. A cornerstone of my upbringing, thanks to my mom, Sylvia, Eddy's book made me *question* the architecture of Life: human life and existence beyond this mortal sphere. What is the Floor Plan of the Labyrinth that encompasses our Past Life, Present Life, and Future Life—the Herebefore, Here, and Hereafter?

METAPHOR

Like spiritual-skygazers throughout time, I seek to grok the truth and build it: unriddle the Form & Story of the Architecture of Reality and express my vision metaphorically through Art.

But I only became an architect after an encounter with another life-changing book. I vividly remember that summer in 1972 after my first year at Princeton. I spent my days painting houses and evenings beside a waterfall in the sanctuary of a walled garden at the Institute for Advanced Study—immersed in the pages of novelist Ayn Rand's *The Fountainhead*. Architect Howard Roark, Rand's protagonist—a radical idealist impelled by the anthem "My work done my way"—summoned me to my lifelong adventure.

Only now, as I write these acknowledgments, do I realize that the spellbinding force of Rand's book—combined with the maverick insights of Eddy's—also kindled in me a subconscious desire to become a writer.

MYTH

Fast-forward 29 years. In 2001, thanks to screenwriter David McKenna, a third book irreversibly shaped my path: Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. I saw that Rand, unknowingly, evoked through Roark the spirit of a predecessor: the mythical ancient Greek architect Campbell called "the hero of the way of thought"—inventor of the Labyrinth and Wings, who has since become my avatar: D A E D A L U S .

As I navigate the maze of my vision quest, I thank *everyone* who has helped my dreams take flight: collaborators, patrons, contractors, students, friends, and family. I offer a special homage to three allies—a marvelous blend of Myers Briggs types: creative wizards Peter Waldman, George Gintole, and Richard Rosa.

Iconic Peter, Wizard of Imagination. My *Fountainhead* summer inspired me to sign up, in the spring of 1973, for Professor Waldman's design studio. Legendary Educator and wildly original Transcontextual Thinker—an ENFP Idea-Generating Sorcerer who sees potential and connections everywhere!—magical Peter ignited my love affair with architecture, revealing the secret world of building design and architecture's symbolic connections to the world beyond aesthetics and form. Project one? Analyze Le Corbusier's Palace of the Assembly at Chandigarh. Project two? Design a house for a painter. Both projects indelibly shaped my destiny.

Gifted George, Wizard of Composition & Color. George launched my teaching career. Twelve years earlier, in 1976, when he arrived from Cooper Union and joined me in graduate school at Princeton, he mentored me along a life-changing path into the art world. By unveiling the works of masters like Diebenkorn and Matisse, George broadened my aesthetic horizons. He opened my eyes to the power of a painting to evoke a building. Artistic Sage, ISFP George taught me how to see—and inspired me to practice architecture true to its ideal nature: Art—an art profoundly interwoven with all the arts and central to the narrative of art history.

Grandmaster Richard, Wizard of Form. A brilliant painter and ENFJ Master Teacher with a Bobby Fischer Architecture IQ, Richard (aka 11) inspired me to double down on painting. In 1995, we taught side-by-side at UVA. Our mutual love of chess as a metaphor for art forged an unbreakable bond. And 21 years later, Richard's Florence Symposium on Formalism laid the foundation for this book. Oh, the emotions we shared in Michelangelo's Medici Chapel—an epic display of the Chess Game of Art: Visual Ef9ects. 11 + 7 heaven.

Thank you, Story gods. You sent me a trio of architect-painter soul mates.

And then there's hero David Zlowe. Without his brains, heart, and guts—his open mind, loyal friendship, and courage—there would be no major built expression of my interpretation of Visual Ef9ects, my artistic vision of the World made manifest through an architecture of Form & Story: our award-winning project, Dante|Telescope House.

Finally, thank you, unknown reader. Fate may have led you here. I created this book for you—for people like Mook, the last student to thank me after my second Florence lecture, "The House of the Human Face." She said, "I hope someday I can inspire others the way you have inspired me." I assured her, "You will. Because as Earl Nightingale said, 'You become what you think about.'"

I dedicate this book to Laura. Her spirit guided me throughout my journey as I brought the book to life. For every "Mook" across time and place, daring to hope their work might someday inspire others. For all who wage the War of Art, blazing their tortured path like the knight in chess—blissfully, in the words of Victor Shklovsky, "forbidden to take the straight road."

My book presents a manifesto: Build Brave. Build Beautiful. Build the Truth.

This Is the Way.

WHAT IS ARCHITECTURE?

I DESIGN BUILDINGS THAT TRADE IN WHAT I CALL THE **SILVER COIN OF ART.** I STAMP ONE SIDE OF THE COIN WITH THE AVATAR OF THE WHITE ARMY: THE **WHITE KNIGHT OF FORM**. I STAMP THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN WITH THE AVATAR OF THE BLACK ARMY: THE **BLACK KNIGHT OF STORY.**

WHAT IS ARCHITECTURE?

ARCHITECTURE IS A SILVER COIN

INSCRIBED ON ONE SIDE, THE BATTLE CRY OF THE WHITE ARMY OF **FORM**:
ARCHITECTURE IS THE STAGE SET FOR THE DRAMA OF LIFE.

INSCRIBED ON THE OTHER SIDE, THE BATTLE CRY OF THE BLACK ARMY OF **STORY**:
ARCHITECTURE IS A STORY TOLD THROUGH A BUILDING.

I overlay the Silver

Coin of Art with

the metaphor of

chess to bring the

complex, dynamic

relationship of

Form & Story to

life.

through my cast of characters, i present

AN ARCHITECTURE OF FORM & STORY an architecture of AESTHETICS & SYMBOLICS:

CHESS MOVES & CHESS MEANING

WHAT IS ARCHITECTURE?

ARCHITECTURE IS A CHESS GAME OF FORM & STORY WAGED ON THE BATTLEFIELD OF A BUILDING AND ITS SITE

THE WHITE ARMY OF VISUAL AESTHETICS CRIES:

FORM

ARCHITECTURE IS THE STAGE SET FOR THE DRAMA OF LIFE.

THE BLACK ARMY OF VISUAL SYMBOLICS CRIES:

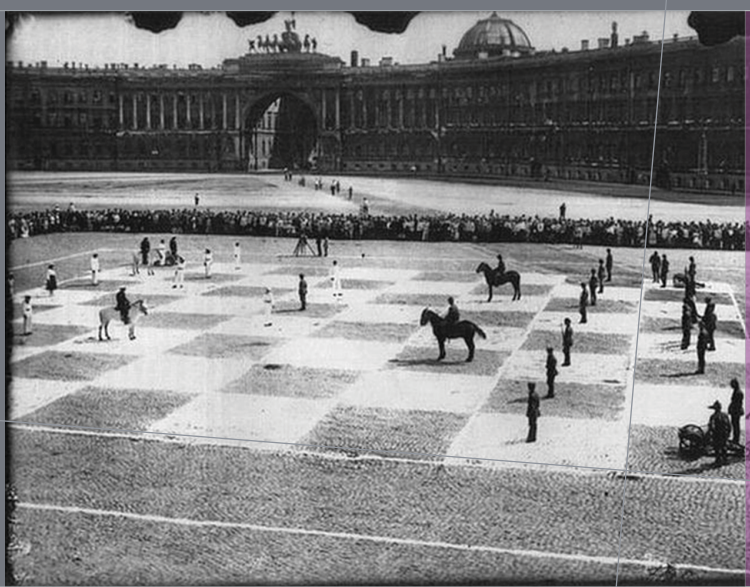
STORY

ARCHITECTURE IS A STORY TOLD THROUGH A BUILDING.

THE ARMIES OF FORM & STORY FIGHT THE WAR OF ART | THEY FIGHT FOR OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART

In 1923, Le Corbusier published his iconic book *Toward a New Architecture.*
I vision-quest . . .

TOWARD A SIGNIFICANT ARCHITECTURE
AN ARCHITECTURE OF FORM & STORY



LIFE-SIZE CHESS GAME ON PALACE SQUARE, ST. PETERSBURG, 1924

through my cast of characters, i present

AN ARCHITECTURE OF FORM & STORY an architecture of AESTHETICS & SYMBOLICS:

CHESS MOVES & CHESS MEANING

SIGNIFICANT ARCHITECTURE

ARCHITECTURE IS A CHESS GAME OF FORM & STORY WAGED ON THE BATTLEFIELD OF A BUILDING AND ITS SITE

ARCHITECTURE IS A VISION QUEST: THE WORLD IN A BUILDING — A METAPHOR | A CREATIVE DEMONSTRATION OF TRUTH

TOWARD A SIGNIFICANT ARCHITECTURE

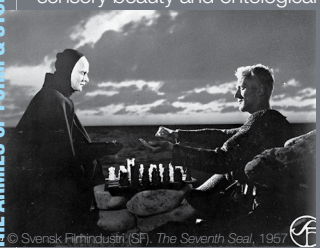
THE ARMIES OF FORM & STORY FIGHT THE WAR OF ART. THEY FIGHT FOR OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART.

2001 | THE ORIGINAL MEANING OF THE WORD *BUILDING* IS "TO BE." A building is a place *to be*—and not just physically but also mentally, emotionally, spiritually. Visually! I endeavor to create buildings that reflect this consciousness, drawing their power from architecture's prehistoric, metaphysical origins.

Since the beginning, architects have faced a tremendous challenge: How can we make in this world a *Significant Place to Be*? How can we construct an enduring dwelling place, a shelter from the ordinary and the unbearable: a refuge for contemplation, creativity, and play, a sanctuary for imagination, work, and love? How can we structure the solid and the void of human existence, the visible and the invisible, make manifest the ardent will to form and the relentless demand to mean, and realize the presence of transcendent architectures that illumine the mind and move the heart, uplift the eyes and stir the soul? How can we make a building a work of art? How can we disclose the true form of the edifice of the world?

What I call ***Significant Architecture*** —Transcendent Architecture, resonating with Impact & Meaning—reflects this timeless challenge and, ideally, does so in original ways, causing in us a welling up of emotion and insight into the architecture of life and ourselves.

Ontology is the branch of metaphysics that deals with the nature and relations of being. As I see it, a building is an ontological assertion: a view of the nature and architecture of being—an artistic vision of what it means "to be" and to dwell in the world. In other words, Significant Architecture is a physical and psychological expression —an aesthetic and symbolic expression—of an architect's concept of sensory beauty and ontological truth.



© Svensk Filmindustri (SF). *The Seventh Seal*, 1957

ARCHITECTURE IS THE RED PILL

"GREAT ART IS THE OUTWARD EXPRESSION OF AN INNER LIFE OF THE ARTIST, AND THIS INNER LIFE WILL RESULT IN HIS PERSONAL VISION OF THE WORLD."
—EDWARD HOPPER

PREFACE | 24
GROKKING THE WORLD: ARCHITECTURE IS A VISION QUEST

VISUAL EF9ECTS MANIFESTO | 26

28 OPENING

INTRODUCTION | 32 **1**
A BUILDING IS A MOVIE: THE WORLD IN A RECTANGLE . . .

FLASHBACK | 38 **2**
41 || "DAEDALUS 9" TRADEMARK CONCEPTS

WORLD VIEW | 46 **3**
48 || CUBIST KNIGHTMARES | FORM & STORY @ 24 FPS — A
56 || SILVER COIN | SILVER KNIGHT — B
60 || SIGNIFICANT SPACEMAKING — C
THE EMPTY RECTANGLE
78 || DANTE | TELESCOPE HOUSE — D
THE AESTHETIC & SYMBOLIC RECTANGLE

WHITE KNIGHT MOVES | 94 **4**
BLACK KNIGHT MEANINGS | 110 **5**
SILVER KNIGHT MOVES & MEANINGS | 120 **6**

134 MIDDLE GAME

THE KNIGHT, THE MOUNTAIN, AND THE HOUSE: FLORENCE TALKS | 136 **7**

THE KNIGHT 138
VISUALEF9ECTS

THE MOUNTAIN 566
568 || BASE CAMP | "THE SYMBOLIC RECTANGLE"

THE HOUSE 576
580 || DREAM HOUSE | COMPOSITION FOR LAURA
584 || THE HOUSE OF THE HUMAN FACE

610 END GAME

CHECK | 613 **8**
614 || CLOCKWORK DUNKIRK | 8
620 || ARRIVAL | 9
THE CHESS GAME OF ART — MY SILVER KNIGHT RATING SYSTEM EXPLAINED
628 || ARCHITECTURE AS STAGE SET — A FRAME OF REFERENCE

CHECKMATE: DANTE AND DAEDALUS | 642 **9**

EPILOGUE: KNIGHT MOVES KHQ | 678 Δ

ADDENDUM: MOVE & MEANING — WHAT IS FORMALISM? | 702 **A**

WHAT IS ARCHITECTURE?

ARCHITECTURE IS A CHESS GAME OF FORM & STORY WAGED ON THE BATTLEFIELD OF A BUILDING AND ITS SITE

ARCHITECTURE IS A VISION QUEST: THE WORLD IN A BUILDING — A METAPHOR | A CREATIVE DEMONSTRATION OF TRUTH

ARCHITECTURE IS THE STAGE SET FOR THE DRAMA OF LIFE
ARCHITECTURE IS A STORY TOLD THROUGH A BUILDING

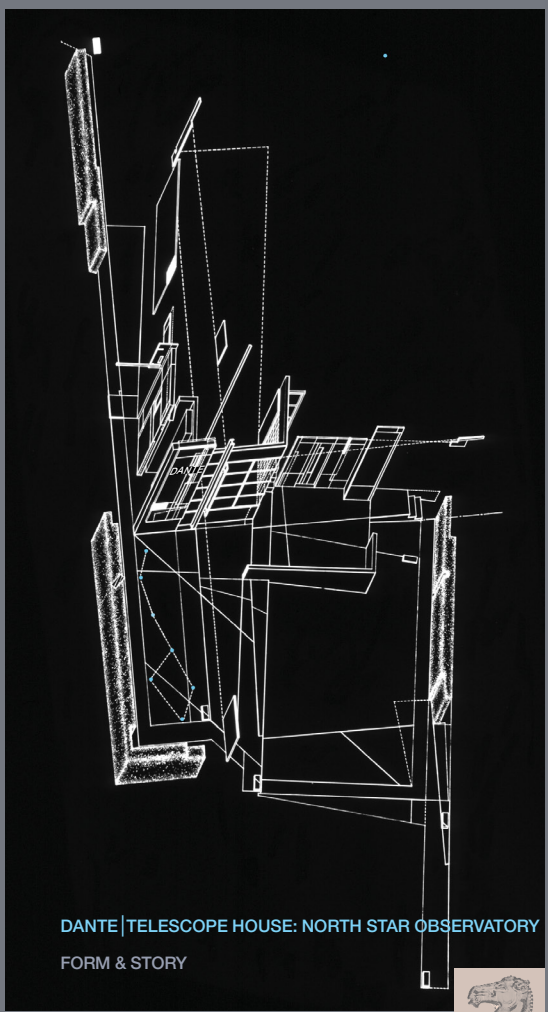
THE ARMIES OF FORM & STORY FIGHT THE WAR OF ART. THEY FIGHT FOR OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART.

THE ART OF BUILDING inspires architects to soar—to explore and materialize metaphors: find limitless ways to express what Clive Bell called, in his book *Art* (1914), "Significant Form"—and its partner: what I call Significant Space.

"**THERE ARE MANY ARCHITECTURES**" —as my daughter said precociously at age 10. I seek to realize one of them: an original expression of Significant Form & Significant Space—uniting to make what I call Significant Place.

I created a Significant Place at Dante|Telescope House, images of which you will see filtering through this book. As the title of the building signals, the house resonates inside and outside with the memory of architecture's origins in stories and stars.

I conjured an enchanted, visionary realm marked out for the observation of reality —a *Significant Architecture* carved from dreams: the Labyrinth of the World.



DANTE | TELESCOPE HOUSE: NORTH STAR OBSERVATORY

FORM & STORY

ARCHITECTURE IS THE RED PILL

*From the documentary *The Hero's Journey: The World of Joseph Campbell* (1987), written by Jerrold Ballinger, Phil Cousineau, and William Free

| *"THERE'S ONLY ONE STORY: THE PRIMORDIAL WORLD-STORY, TOLD AND RETOLD: ONE SHAPE-SHIFTING STORY OF THE VISION QUEST THAT TRANSFORMS THE WORLD." —JOSEPH CAMPBELL

GROKKING THE WORLD: ARCHITECTURE IS A VISION QUEST

FOR OVER 40 YEARS, I'VE WRESTLED WITH THIS QUESTION: WHAT IS ARCHITECTURE?
When Michelangelo sculpted, he carved a block of marble until he could free the angel that he saw trapped inside. I've been carving the block of marble tagged "What is architecture?" to free the angel-answers that I see trapped inside, answers infused with philosophical, pragmatic, and poetic clarity. I trusted that these answers—timeless answers—would gradually reveal themselves and light my path through the labyrinth of endeavor. I've done my carving through essays and lectures, through buildings, paintings, and books.

In Florence, two years ago, I gave two talks that took another shot at that basic question. I created this book mainly to document those two talks. Professor Richard Rosa, head of the Syracuse University School of Architecture Program in Florence, organized an international symposium, held in February 2016, to address the thorny topic of Formalism, a major focus of my research into art. What I've learned about Formalism over a span of some 30 years has shaped indelibly my mind and my work. The title of this book comes from the title of my symposium talk: "Visual Ef9ects." "The House of the Human Face," the other talk—with no audience in mind, I wrote that six months before Richard invited me to Florence. But a few days after the symposium, Richard asked me to speak to his students. I found my audience.

Both talks spring from a crucial question at the molten core of Formalism—a question that goes hand in hand with my quest to define architecture: What is the intrinsic correlation in Art between Form and Content? This book conveys my current viewpoint. I try to speak as clearly and compellingly to those of you who do not study or practice architecture as to those of you who do. At the heart of my viewpoint lies this: Architecture rests not only on physical foundations but also on metaphysical foundations.

Architecture began as the sacred space marked out by astronomer-priests for the observation of reality: outer reality and inner reality. These temples of space were sometimes the space of sky, not only of land, and the space was delimited *orally* by an augur. Astronomer-priests, augurs—humans who possessed special powers of perception and insight: seers, foretellers, mystics, visionaries—these were the world's first architects. Truth Seekers. Oracle-Storytellers. Spiritual Stargazers.

Architecture beckons us still today to give not only aesthetic expression to materials, space, and light but also symbolic expression to our human plight and spiritual sight, our gaze into the cosmological night.

We get the word *building* from a prehistoric, Indo-European word that means "to be." Architecture reflects humanity's timeless quest to carve out of the marble of the world a *Significant Place to Be*. Ideally, such a place gives outer expression to our inner being, strikes a deep emotional chord, enchants us, and speaks to us through the sorcery of its transformative powers: courage, imagination, and truth.

Architecture is a call to Know Thyself, to look deeply into the inner construction of our being—and at the same time to fathom the outer construction of the world: a call to make a Significant Place for the observation and contemplation (con-*temple*-ation) of Reality.

Like the first architects, I vision-quest to grok the Architecture of the Form & Story of the World—to "understand profoundly and intuitively" the Form & Story of Our Being—then give artistic and poetic expression to what I see through the metaphorical power of a building and its site.

Architecture is a Vision Quest. I've got angels to free.

VISUAL EF9ECTS

1 "ARCHITECTURE IS A CHESS GAME OF FORM & STORY WAGED ON THE BATTLEFIELD OF A BUILDING AND ITS SITE," I PROCLAIM AS THE ANTHEM OF THIS BOOK. THE WHITE ARMY OF FORM CRIES, "ARCHITECTURE IS THE STAGE SET FOR THE DRAMA OF LIFE." THE BLACK ARMY OF STORY CRIES, "ARCHITECTURE IS A STORY TOLD THROUGH A BUILDING." **THE ARMIES OF FORM & STORY FIGHT THE WAR OF ART. THEY FIGHT FOR OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART.**

2 A GREAT BUILDING PRESENTS MORE THAN THE SPELLBINDING PRODUCTION VALUES OF A MCLAREN. MORE THAN A BREATHTAKING EXPRESSION OF THE AESTHETICS OF MATERIALS, SPACE, AND LIGHT— MORE THAN A STUNNING DISPLAY OF ABSTRACT FORM.

3 LIKE ARCHITECTURE SINCE THE DAWN OF TIME, A GREAT BUILDING TELLS A SYMBOLIC STORY.

4 I PICTURE FORM AND STORY AS TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN: A SILVER COIN. A GREAT BUILDING TRADES IN BOTH SIDES OF THE SILVER COIN OF ART.

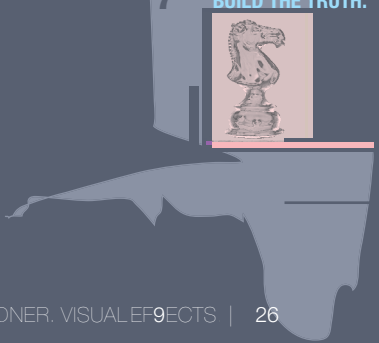
5 IN *VISUAL EF9ECTS*, I TURN TO THE CINEMATIC METAPHOR OF CHESS TO BRING THE DYNAMIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FORM AND STORY TO LIFE. THE METAPHOR OF CHESS HELPS US SEE HOW FORM & STORY CAN JOIN FORCES, THROUGH "COLLABORATIVE CONFLICT," FRAUGHT WITH PERIL, TO CREATE A HEART-POUNDING WORK OF ART.

6 THE RESPECTIVE AVATARS OF THE TWO ARMIES LEAD THE CHARGE: THE WHITE KNIGHT & BLACK KNIGHT. PRESIDING OVER THIS HIGH STAKES CHESS GAME OF FORM & STORY—THE WAR OF ART—STANDS THE CHESS PIECE THAT BLENDS THE WHITE KNIGHT OF FORM (AESTHETICS: CHESS *MOVES*) & THE BLACK KNIGHT OF STORY (SYMBOLICS: CHESS *MEANING*) INTO ONE KNIGHT: THE AVATAR OF ART, WHO I DUB THE SILVER KNIGHT.

7 *VISUAL EF9ECTS* SPRINGS FROM MY TALK BY THE SAME TITLE THAT I GAVE IN 2016 FOR THE SYMPOSIUM ON FORMALISM AT THE SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE PROGRAM IN FLORENCE. THE BOOK REFLECTS MY QUEST TO CREATE A SIGNIFICANT ARCHITECTURE: AN ARCHITECTURE OF FORM & STORY THAT SPINS A CREATIVE TALE OF BEAUTY & TRUTH SO WELL TOLD THAT WE FEEL AN UPWELLING OF AESTHETIC & SYMBOLIC EMOTIONS. OVERWHELMED WITH PLEASURE AND BLINDED BY INSIGHT, WE FIND OURSELVES FLOORED BY THE TRANSFORMING POWER OF ART.

8 TO ILLUSTRATE MY THEME OF FORM & STORY, I WEAVE THROUGH THE PAGES OF THIS BOOK MY PERSONAL STORY OF STAR-CROSSED LOVE.

9 "A STORY," SAYS STORYTELLING THEORIST ROBERT MCKEE, "IS A CREATIVE DEMONSTRATION OF TRUTH." SO IS A BUILDING. IN A BUILDING, *EVERYTHING MUST BE FORMED*, BUT A GREAT BUILDING, LIKE A GREAT MOVIE, PRESENTS MORE THAN FORM, MORE THAN VISUAL EFFECTS. A GREAT BUILDING PRESENTS VISUAL EF9ECTS. THE "9" STANDS FOR STORY. TRUTH. THIS BOOK PRESENTS A MANIFESTO. BUILD BEAUTIFUL. BUILD THE TRUTH.



ARCHITECTURE AND THE CHESS GAME OF

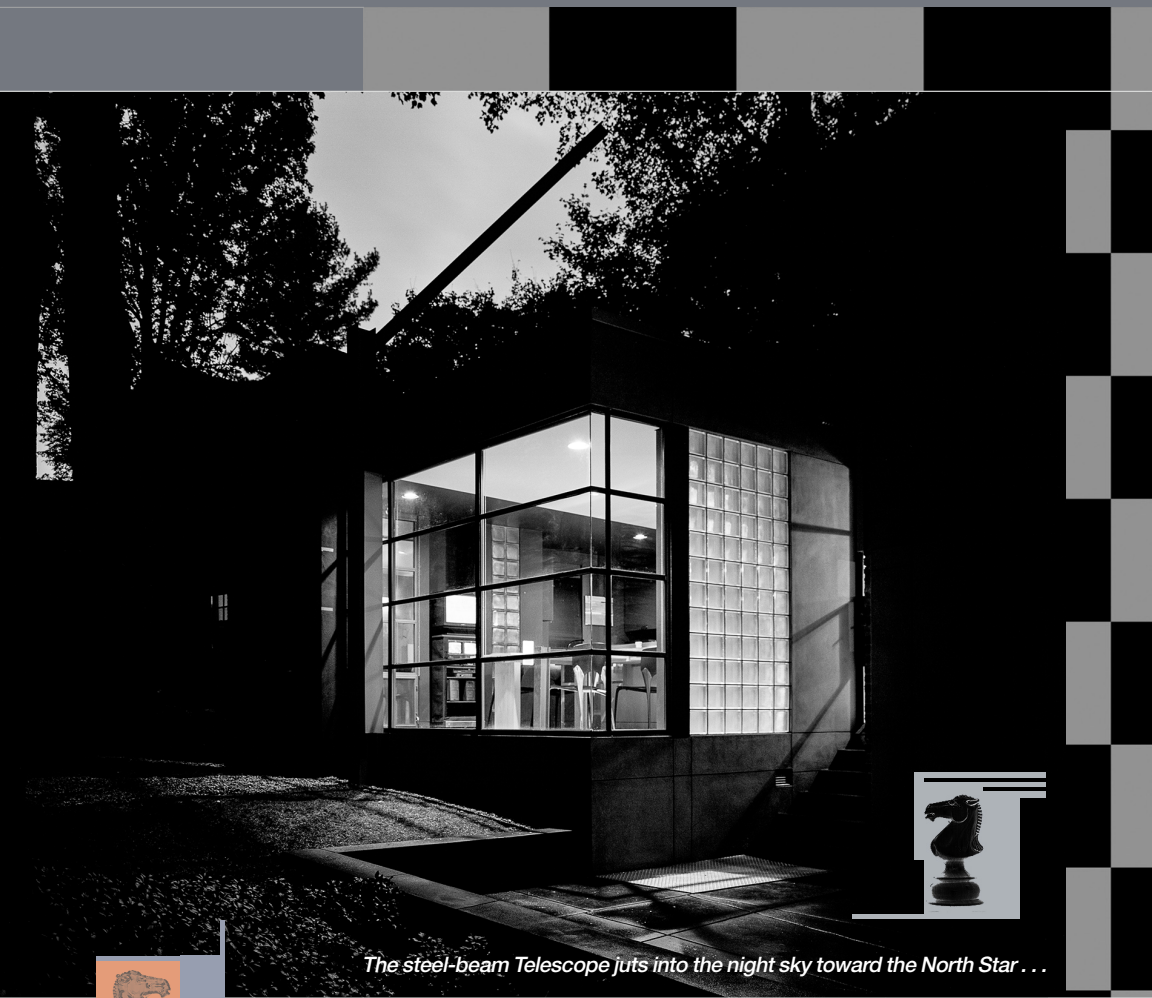
FORM & STORY

A BUILDING IS AN AESTHETIC & SYMBOLIC EXPRESSION OF AN ARCHITECT'S VISION OF THE WORLD: A CREATIVE DEMONSTRATION OF COURAGE, IMAGINATION, AND TRUTH.

An architect wields three secret powers—1. the power to orient us

Opening

Architecture is the world in a building.



The steel-beam Telescope juts into the night sky toward the North Star . . .

DANTE | TELESCOPE HOUSE 1991–1996. PHOTOGRAPH © YUKIO FUTAGAWA | GLOBAL ARCHITECTURE HOUSES 51, 1997

THE ARMIES OF FORM & STORY FIGHT THE WAR OF ART | THEY FIGHT FOR OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART

K N I G H T M O V E S

ARCHITECTURE IS A CHESS GAME OF FORM & STORY
PLAYED ON THE AESTHETIC & SYMBOLIC RECTANGLE OF ART

JUST. LIKE. A. MOVIE.

©Svensk Filmindustri (SF). *The Seventh Seal*, 1957

D A E D A L U S

ARCHITECTURE IS THE STAGE SET FOR THE DRAMA OF LIFE –
THE DRAMA OF LIFE AND DEATH

ARCHITECTURE IS A STORY TOLD THROUGH A BUILDING

THE WHITE KNIGHT OF FORM + THE BLACK KNIGHT OF STORY =
THE SILVER KNIGHT OF FORM & STORY | MY AVATAR

INTRODUCTION | 1

SIGNIFICANT SPACE: Central Park, Manhattan, 1995. Gouache and pencil (charcoal, graphite) on paper. 18 x 24 in.

A BUILDING IS A MOVIE: THE WORLD IN A RECTANGLE . . .

A good movie requires more than good set design. A good movie must tell a good story.

That's the premise of this book.

"VISUAL EF9ECTS" signals an architecture that presents more than visual effects. More than Aesthetics: FORM. An architecture that also presents an expression of the deep structure of Symbolics—Metaphor and Meaning: STORY.

FORM & STORY.

Both.

Just like a good movie.

Because no matter how compelling a movie's film architecture. METROPOLIS. BLADE RUNNER. No matter how exquisite a movie looks. VERTIGO. MANHATTAN. THE SEARCHERS. Unless a movie presents a good story well told (like those five movies), viewers feel disappointed. A movie's visual impact—its production values and artistic expression—can't make a movie a home run.

Only one element of a movie can do that—the one and only element of a movie that can make viewers feel emotionally, psychologically, and spiritually fulfilled.

STORY.

If a movie's look is good but a movie's story isn't? Say, AD ASTRA? It's even got Brad Pitt. So what. Epic bore. We look at our phones.

But flip that. If the film's look is ho-hum or MIA, but the movie's story is good? If the movie presents a significant story beautifully told? Say, SPOTLIGHT?

Academy Award for Best Picture.

And if both are great—if the movie's look is inspired and a movie's story is daring and profound? Say, ARRIVAL or THE MATRIX?

Critical success. Box office hit. Artistic jackpot.

A cinema phenomenon.

Because if a movie's sensory look and feel, its sights and sounds, editing, lighting, and cinematography—a movie's aesthetic expression, its FORM—partners with the movie's screenplay, its STORY, which storytelling theorist Robert McKee defines in his book *Story* as "a creative demonstration of truth" . . .

If FORM & STORY unite to make a work of surpassing quality . . .

You have a movie for all time.

A movie that speaks to our senses and our soul.
A work of art that hooks us, holds us, and pays us off with catharsis, insight, and truth.

Jean-Luc Godard said that a movie is "the world in an hour and a half."

That's what I want. Architecture that presents the world in an hour and a half.

The world in a building.

The world in a rectangle.

Just like a movie.
And a painting, photograph, and book . . .

THE WORLD.

FORM & STORY. THE ARTISTIC JACKPOT.

Code name:

VISUALEFFECTS

This book, *Visual Ef9ects* (silent "9"), presents my theory of architecture.

Through a collage of chapters that form a book more episodic than serial,
I stake out my intellectual site, the arena of my work.
I survey the boundaries that define the canvas for my research into architecture.
I reinforce and deepen the foundation, which I've already laid in my essays
and other books, for what I term "Significant Architecture."

Visual Ef9ects presents the special lens through which I view architecture.
Yes, a lens distinctly individual.
But at the same time, I believe, a lens also archetypally universal.

Visual Ef9ects presents the "trailer of theory" that sets up the "feature film of practice"—what I one day hope to build, the sequel to Dante|Telescope House:

THE DAEDALUS PROJECT | A TRILOGY: THE LABYRINTHIUM.

I organize this book into three acts, the classic story structure of screenplay design. Screenplay Architecture.

Beginning. Middle. End.

Also the classic structure of a chess game:
Opening. Middle Game. End Game.

And I weave throughout these three sections of the book members of the trio of Knights that make up my Knights of the Round Table—the Knights of the Rectangle Table (Knights of the Rectangular Chessboard)—in my Form & Story system.

The White Knight of Aesthetics: Form.
The Black Knight of Symbolics: Story.

And their amalgam.
Their blend.
Their fusion.

I.E.

A gray knight.

But a shiny gray knight!

A knight in shining armor.

A Silver Knight.

THE SILVER KNIGHT OF FORM & STORY.

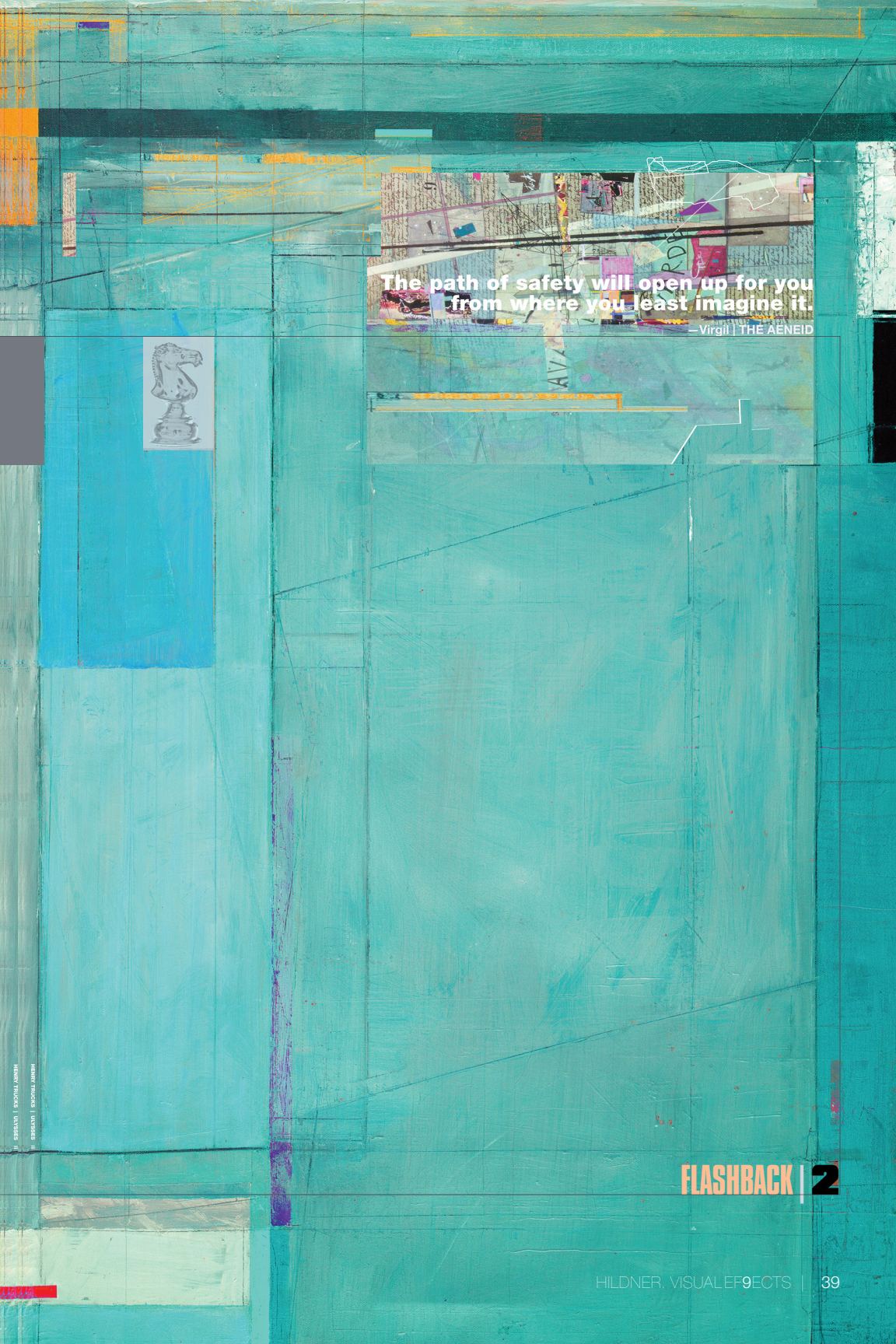
THE SILVER KNIGHT OF ART.

My avatar.

I SEEK TO MAKE A **SIGNIFICANT ARCHITECTURE**
— an architecture that not only makes a big impact,
but also means something:
I seek to make an architecture of FORM & STORY.

THE SILVER KNIGHT OF FORM & STORY.

THE SILVER KNIGHT OF ART.


The path of safety will open up for you
from where you least imagine it.
—Virgil | THE AENEID
HENRY TRUCKS | ULYSSES

FLASHBACK | 2

"DAEDALUS 9" TRADEMARK CONCEPTS

ARTISTIC TERMS COINED* BY JEF7REY HILDNER | THE ARCHITECT PAINTER

1. **NEGATIVE CUBISM**

2. **SIGNIFICANT SPACE** SPACE-MAKING / SPACE-MARKING : SPACECRAFT

3. ***EMPTY / FULL** EMPTY SPACE / FULL SPACE : EMPTY CENTER / FULL EDGE

   I transposed terms used by Le Corbusier: *le plein et le vide* (translation: "full and empty")
   —expressing an old French concept of the two basic conditions of space.

4. **JIGSAW DESIGN**

5. **CONTROL AND SOUL**

6. **PRETTY AND GRITTY**

7. **FIGURE|FIELD** MAKING THE FIGURE / MARKING THE FIELD

8. **MOVE & MEANING**

9. **FORM & STORY**

ON FEBRUARY 22, 2010,
I GAVE MYSELF 9 HOURS TO CREATE A 100-PAGE BOOK.
THE RESULT:
THE FIRST EDITION OF *DAEDALUS 9*.
I STARTED FROM SCRATCH.
I DIDN'T HAVE A PLAN.
ALL I HAD WAS A GOAL.
AND A CLOCK.
LIKE A MUSICIAN, I SIMPLY STARTED TO PLAY.
AND GUIDED BY THE THELONIOUS MONK PRINCIPLE,
"THERE ARE NO WRONG NOTES,"
I PLAYED TILL TIME RAN OUT THEN SENT THE PDFs OF THE INTERIOR AND
COVER TO THE PRINTER.
IN THIS 2018 EDITION REMIX,
I RESET THE CLOCK, GIVING MYSELF MORE TIME TO DEVELOP THE BOOK
AND CLEARLY CONVEY CORE CONCEPTS.
UPSHOT?
A GPS FOR ALL MY FUTURE WORK:
A MANIFESTO.

7

KHQ

THE ARCHITECT PAINTER CONTROL AND SOUL

THE ARCHITECT PAINTER PRESS
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA
ISBN 978-0-9987030-3-9

Daedalus 9. Full Cover (back cover on this page; spine and front cover on opposite page). Go to: archive.org/details/Daedalus9-Cover

HILDNER

DAEDALUS 9

DAEDALUS 9

JEFFREY HILDNER

THE ARCHITECT PAINTER

[improv 1.0]

2018 EDITION

d

VE9

"DAEDALUS 9" TRADEMARK CONCEPTS:

ARTISTIC TERMS COINED BY JEF7REY HILDNER | THE ARCHITECT PAINTER

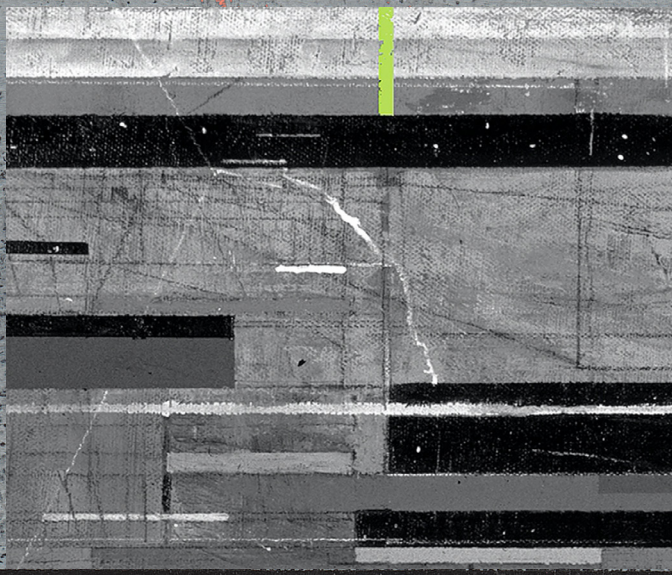
1. **Negative Cubism**
2. **Significant Space**
3. ***Empty / Full**
4. **Jigsaw Design**
5. **Control and Soul**
6. **Pretty and Gritty**
7. **Figure | Field**
8. **Move & Meaning**
9. **Form & Story**

7

9. FORM & STORY

SILVER COIN
SILVER KNIGHT

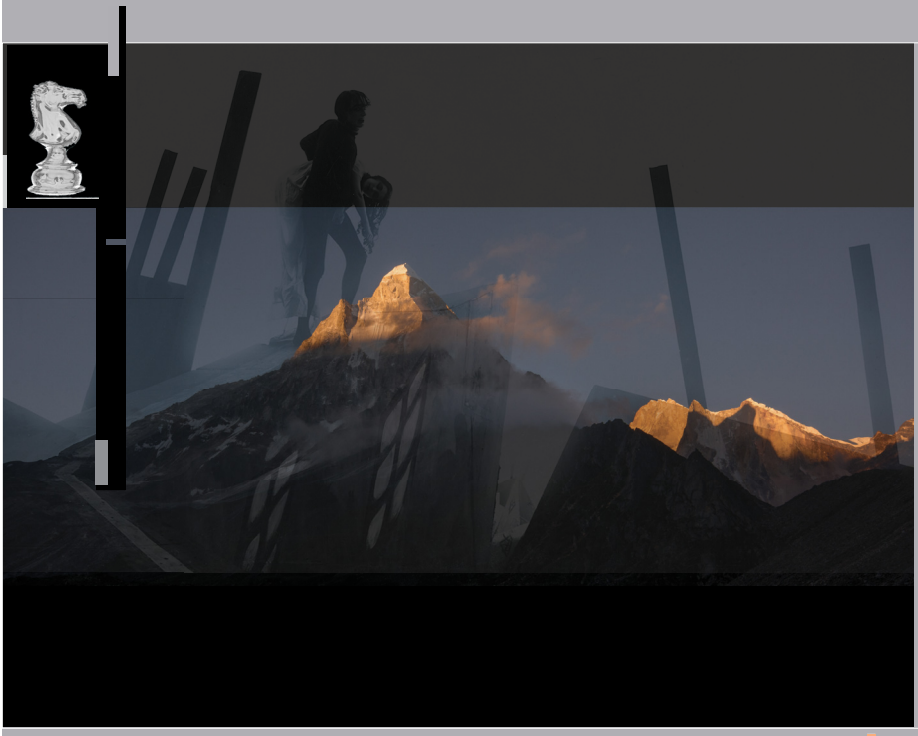
>



A BUILDING IS AN AESTHETIC & SYMBOLIC EXPRESSION OF AN ARCHITECT'S VISION OF THE WORLD:
A CREATIVE DEMONSTRATION OF COURAGE, IMAGINATION, AND TRUTH.

ORION CINEMA HOUSE

WORLD VIEW | 3



CUBIST**KNIGHTMARES**

I laid out basic FORM & STORY concepts in the following commentary that I posted on IMDb (International Movie Database) about *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*.

CUBIST KNIGHTMARES | FORM & STORY @ 24 FPS

I don't like horror, but I showed THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI in my film architecture seminar, because the filmmakers hold graphic violence in check, present a good story well told, and conjure a brave visual work of art.

Most of all, I like how this silent 1920 surreal thriller illustrates the unity of what I call Form & Story—a concept that helps me design my screenplays and my books, paintings, and buildings.

Let me set up my commentary by laying some theoretical groundwork, using terms and concepts I've devised in my practice of architecture.

ARCHITECTURE IS A SILVER COIN

Inscribed on one side, ***FORM:***
Architecture is the stage set for the drama of life.

Inscribed on the other side, ***STORY:***
Architecture is a story told through a building.

One side emphasizes Aesthetics: architecture as an Abstract Aesthetic System that expresses compositional and physical technique. The other side emphasizes Symbolics: architecture as a Symbolic Image System that expresses intellectual and emotional meaning.

CHESS OFFERS A HELPFUL ANALOGY

Think of Aesthetics as the system of abstract Moves that chess pieces make when deployed by a chess player, toward the goal of winning the game. Moves like left, right, back, forward, diagonal, slide, jump.

Think of Symbolics as the associational Meaning of a set of chess pieces, meaning conveyed mainly by the names of the pieces: a medieval army of warriors (knights and pawns) and counselors (bishops and queen) dedicated to defending the king and to destroying the opposing army and its king.

⎚ Public Domain, US. Still frame from *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, 1920. Photo via https://archive.org

Chess Meaning has nothing to do with the Chess Moves, the strategies and tactics required of a chess player to win the game.

So on the one hand, these two systems of chess exist independent of one another. And on the other hand, rather exquisitely, these two systems of chess, Chess Moves (Abstract Aesthetic System: Form) and Chess Meaning (Symbolic Image System: Story), weave together to form a self-referential game, logistical and metaphorical, about war.

The complex interplay of the two sides of the Silver Coin of Architecture—the Silver Coin of Art—add up to THE VISUAL: the sum of THE VISIBLE + THE INVISIBLE, stirring within us, ideally, waves of pleasure and insight that reward our twin powers of observation and contemplation.

Our desire for beauty and truth.

The artistic consciousness that governs CALIGARI trades in this coin.

CALIGARI PRESENTS THE SILVER COIN OF ART

For example, take the moment at 6:18 into the film (opposite page), where Alan stands in his attic room, centered in the cinematic frame, pillar-like and pensive, his face the center of visual impact, the book in his hands vying for this honor, our focus then zigzagging (like the zigzag of the room itself) into the picture space, first to the chair and shard of the story-significant bed in the shallow space to Alan's left then to the desk and window in the deep space to his right.

Look how the triangle of light on the wall behind Alan diagonals through his left jacket lapel, signaling precisionist control of the architecture of the visual canvas, collapsing character and set into a unified geometric system, integrating figure and field, object and space, man and place, not only spatially and visually, but also emotionally.

Alan doesn't stand as an isolated object against a neutral background. He stands enmeshed within the woven fabric of a story-charged background, as much a part of him as his clothes, a man in tension-laced alignment with his well-organized but off-kilter environment, alone in a room that looks physically empty, but feels atmospherically full.

Trapped.

This introverted book-holding attic dweller, suppressing a recent scare, becomes an extension of the architecture, and the architecture becomes an extension of him. Man and architecture collage together as one.

The visible geometry of the Outer Cubism of the Room reflects the invisible anxiety of the Interior Cubism of the Man.

The optical architecture of Alan's outer world reflects the emotional architecture of his inner world. And vice versa.

℗ Public Domain, US. Still frame from *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, 1920. Photo via bluray.com

Through this device of inner/outer reciprocal reflection, the controlling visual device of director Robert Wiene's suspenseful frame story (written by Carl Mayer and Hans Janowitz, art directed by Hermann Warm, Walter Reimann, and Walter Röhrig), architecture is an exterior expression of interior cogitation, a counterpoint to the ordinary take on architecture as "form follows function."

The form of CALIGARI's architecture does follow its function, but this function has less to do with physical construction and more to do with psychological projection.

And mood.

In CALIGARI, architecture not only presents the stage set for the drama of life, architecture externalizes the drama of life.

ENTER, IF YOU DARE, THE CUBIST CHAMBERS OF THE SILVER KNIGHT . . .
THE CUBIST CHAMBERS OF FORM & STORY

On the chess board of Alan's room—within the carefully arranged chessboard space of his weird world of light and dark (and wall with a giant rotated black square)—the White Knight of Aesthetics and the Black Knight of Symbolics assert their coequal presence, blending into a shining Gray Knight of Visual Storytelling: what I dub the Silver Knight of Form & Story.

CALIGARI's unified Abstract Aesthetic System and Symbolic Image System create the Meaningful Form of Alan's eccentric home: a sepia-toned arena of inner and outer conflict, menaced by shadows and foreshadows, contorted by currents and undercurrents that flow from the eerie and mysterious Story in which Alan plays a pawn.

What a difference a room makes, jagged, barren, spooky, alive, and dead.

Welcome to CALIGARI's Cubist Knightmares.
Where German Expressionism suffuses Cubism with a dark vibe.

Welcome to the terribly beautiful architecture of CALIGARI's Form & Story. A strange, poetic landscape that unspools, ultimately, from the inner movie reel of the story architects' imagination.

Enter, if you dare, for 77 minutes, CALIGARI's spellbinding Cubist Chambers of the Silver Knight.

JEF7REY HILDNER | STORY ARCHITECT
January 8, 2017
www.imdb.com/user/ur1259009/reviews

WORLD VIEW | B

SILVER**COIN**|SILVER**KNIGHT**

During my younger and more vulnerable years, I was struck by what I learned from my study of early 20th–century literary theorists. And ever since, I have been turning this over in my mind . . . and applying it to my work.

SILVER COIN | SILVER KNIGHT

During my younger and more vulnerable years, I was struck by what I learned from my study of early 20th–century literary theorists. And ever since, I have been turning this over in my mind and applying it to my work.

Russian Formalist leader Victor Shklovsky summed up one of the things I learned in the title of his 1917 essay, "**Art as Device**."

The view of **art as a set of artistic devices applied to materials**—the physical materials of a building and the compositional "materials" (elements) of building design—changed the way I teach and practice architecture. My list on page 41 of "DAEDALUS 9" TRADEMARK CONCEPTS (Concepts = Devices) gives some of the big-picture devices that I've developed through the years and apply to my books, paintings, and buildings as I play what I term the **THE CHESS GAME OF ART**.

Turns out that Victor Shklovsky also wrote another book that changed me: ***Knight's Move*** (1923).

The title itself jumped me forward another move or three through the labyrinth of the philosophy of art, in search of my artistic voice. I've swerved from Shklovsky's fascinating but limited view of how the knight in chess relates to the essence of art. I'm scaffolding my own theory. Building my own house. One in which the knight plays the lead role. I've adopted the **Knight as Avatar**—agent of the double nature of **Art: Aesthetic & Symbolic**. I conduct my work @ KHQ: Knight HeadQuarters, in Sacramento, California.

I explore the THEME OF THE RECTANGLE. And I do so by waging war—synergistic conflict—between what I term the **White Knight of Aesthetics & Black Knight of Symbolics**. **Chess Moves & Chess Meaning.**

I etch the WHITE KNIGHT OF FORM and the BLACK KNIGHT OF STORY into opposite sides of what I define as the **SILVER COIN OF ARCHITECTURE**—the **SILVER COIN OF ART**.

I trade in this coin.

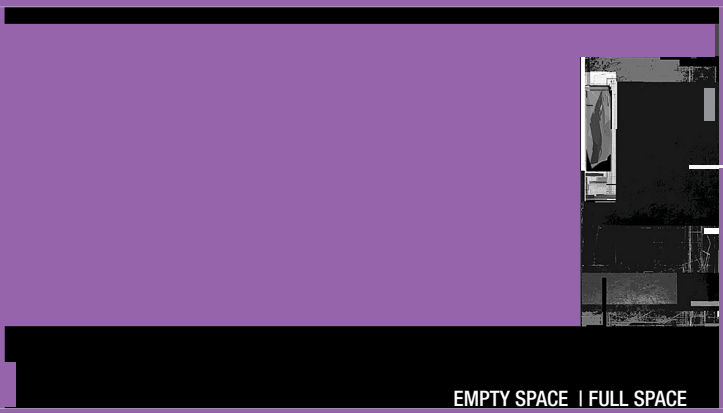
My goal: The **White Knight of Form & Black Knight of Story** assert their coequal presence on the CHESS BOARD of THE AESTHETIC & SYMBOLIC RECTANGLE—book, canvas, site plan, wall—blending into a shining Gray Knight of expression that I dub the **SILVER KNIGHT OF FORM & STORY** aka the **SILVER KNIGHT OF ART**.

Visual Ef9ects reflects my ongoing quest to unify theory-stars into a single constellation that guides my creative demonstration of the CHESS GAME OF ART and what I call **SIGNIFICANT ARCHITECTURE**.

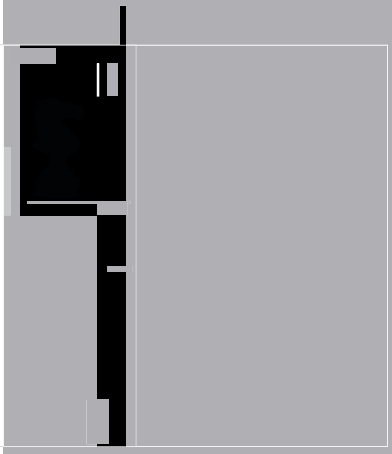
This Polaroid-in-progress constellation has already helped me design my completed project Dante|Telescope House and guides me as I now design the first building of a trilogy to which Dante|Telescope House serves as the Prequel. I call the trilogy THE DAEDALUS PROJECT. And the name of the first project, The Hero's Journey House.

FORM & STORY | SILVER COIN
SILVER KNIGHT

"THE BASIS OF EVERY ART IS CONFLICT." – SERGEI EISENSTEIN



PLAN & ELEVATION: SITE PLAN & WALL | THE EMPTY RECTANGLE



SIGNIFICANT | SPACEMAKING

a peak behind the curtain @ KHQ

THE EMPTY RECTANGLE

SIGNIFICANT SPACEMAKING

THE EMPTY RECTANGLE

On pages 72–77, the six pages at the end of this short essay, I show an example of design development, a progression from A to B to C.

I hope you can see and feel the battle I'm waging between spreads B and C, trying to get everything to click: the look and feel, the balance of elements—the layout, type, color (shades of gray), image, and form and space.

I like B, but I consider it an outtake, one of a series of studies that led me to C, the final, where I strip away much of what I labored to do in the B series.

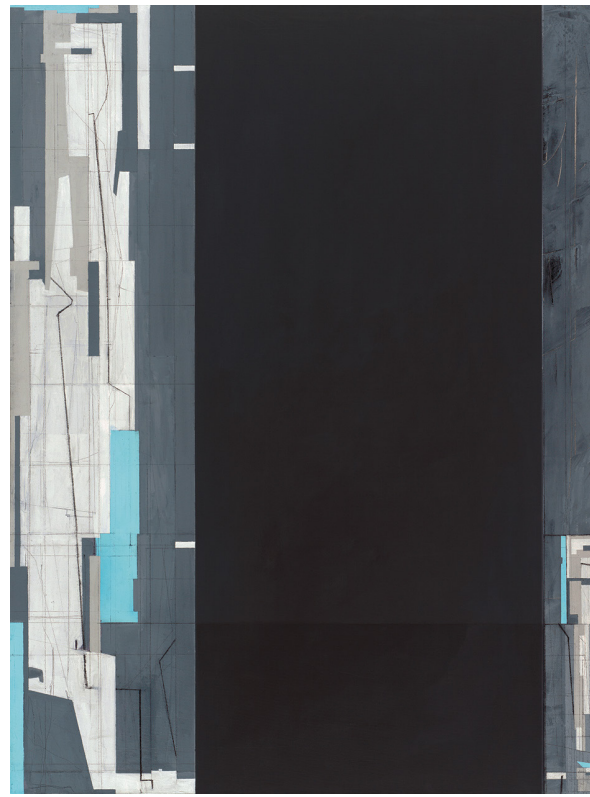
My primary challenge: the placement of the Black Knight of Symbolics. Where to position it on the book's horizontal canvas, on the Chess Board of the Aesthetic & Symbolic Rectangle. How to integrate the Black Knight of Symbolics with *Ithaca Collage* (2010), a 40-by-40-inch giclée that I made for the International "Art in Architecture" Exhibition at The Center for Contemporary Art in Bedminster, New Jersey.

(The exhibition required a square format, or I would have created an asymmetric rectangle, because I emphasize asymmetry in my work, and squares say symmetry: equality of the x & y axes.)

Through the classical device of diptych, *Ithaca Collage* blends my painting *Ithaca* and my building Dante|Telescope House, into a third expression of Form & Story.

In this A, B, C series of layouts, in which *Ithaca Collage* plays a lead role (void in A, solid in B and C), you can see not only Form & Story and its sidekick device, Move & Meaning, in play.

You can also see my other seven "DAEDALUS 9" Trademark Devices at work, including Empty/Full aka Empty Space/Full Space.



TEMPLE OF THE ANCIENT KNIGHT, 1997. Acrylic and pencil on canvas. 40 x 30 in.

Specifically, a Full-Space Edge that defines an Empty-Space Center, which I often idealize as The Empty Rectangle—illustrated by my painting, *Temple of the Ancient Knight*.

The device of Empty Space/Full Space helps me hit my goal of creating what I term Significant Space, a result of treating Form less as a Space-Occupier and more as a Space-Definer.

You can read my essay "SIGNIFICANT SPACE: Turning a negative into a positive in the landscapes (and walls) of modern art" online: archive.org/details/HenryTrucksPainterAncientMythsMeetModernLandscapes.

I learned about the concept of architecture as Space-Occupier versus Space-Definer from "The Crisis of the Object: The Predicament of Texture," a chapter by Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter in their book, *Collage City*.

Early 20–century art critic Clive Bell gives us the term "Significant Form." I redefine Bell's term (more on that in the *Visual Ef9ects* textbook), but if you add Significant Form and Significant Space, you get what I hope most of all to achieve: what I term "Significant Architecture." An architecture that not only makes an impact, but also means something. Something deep.

God is in the details. And revealing God requires knowing when your arrow doesn't quite hit the bull's eye and reshooting until your arrow does hit the bull's eye. No matter how hard I worked on scheme B, I couldn't shake the feeling that the fit in the upper right corner between *Ithaca Collage* and the Black Knight of Symbolics collage didn't hit the bull's–eye. So I worked until I hit scheme C. Which meant saying goodbye to B, as much as I like it. But then it hit me, Show it. I've got all these empty pages, why not fill them a bit more.

At the bottom of each right-hand page, I label the three-stage expression of Empty/Full in the service of Significant Space. But, as I say, I do reach for each of the 9 crayons in the crayon box of "DAEDALUS 9" artistic devices—and for many other device-crayons not listed—as I seek to balance the array of design elements and choreograph the dance of Aesthetics & Symbolics. And note the big move. How the black knight moves from B to C.

Because Knights Move.

CRETE, 1998. Oil and pencil on canvas. 60 x 36 in. My painting *Crete*, opposite page, shows an example of White Knight form-space devices largely inspired by Georges Braque's Synthetic Cubist collages, 1912–1914, and by Henri Matisse's audacious *French-Window at Collioure*, 1914. I apply the device that I call Jigsaw Design: Interlocking positive/negative puzzle pieces along the Full-Space Edges define an Empty-Space Center. Minor and Major Edges correlate via what I call the device of the Knight's Move: a diagonal, L-route *breakaway* of a form-making fragment to another place on the chessboard (the site plan). The white Empty-Center Rectangle—a Central Park-like Empty Space, a Jefferson UVA Lawn Space—reverberates with *Significance*, both compositionally (White Knight) and symbolically (Black Knight), resulting in an Empty Silver Knight Rectangle, simultaneously Aesthetic & Symbolic . . . within the rectangle of the canvas itself, the primary expression of The Aesthetic & Symbolic Rectangle.

"The modern artist is the conscious artist." —Piet Mondrian

I paint because painting allows pure artistic freedom. No client or contractor factors into the equation. No editor makes changes. Time and money don't shape the work. I strive to honor the timeless slogan of the pioneer-artist: "My work, done my way." And through painting, I seek to find the form and space of my architecture.

But in truth, I seek more: to find not only the aesthetic form-and-space "Move system" (Form) of my architecture but also to find the symbolic "Meaning system" (Story) of my architecture. Painting is a quest to discover an architecture of Form & Story.

SIGNIFICANT**SPACEMAKING**

SERGEI EISENSTEIN —
"THE BASIS OF EVERY ART IS CONFLICT."

MOVE & MEANING

SIGNIFICANT**SPACEMAKING**

THE EMPTY RECTANGLE. EMPTY CENTER | FULL EDGE

2023

THE ARCHITECT PAINTER JEF7REY HILDNER PRESENTS A CINEMATIC FUSION OF FORM & STORY: ARCHITECTURE IS THE STAGE SET FOR THE DRAMA OF LIFE . . .
ARCHITECTURE IS A STORY TOLD THROUGH A BUILDING. ENTER SITE >

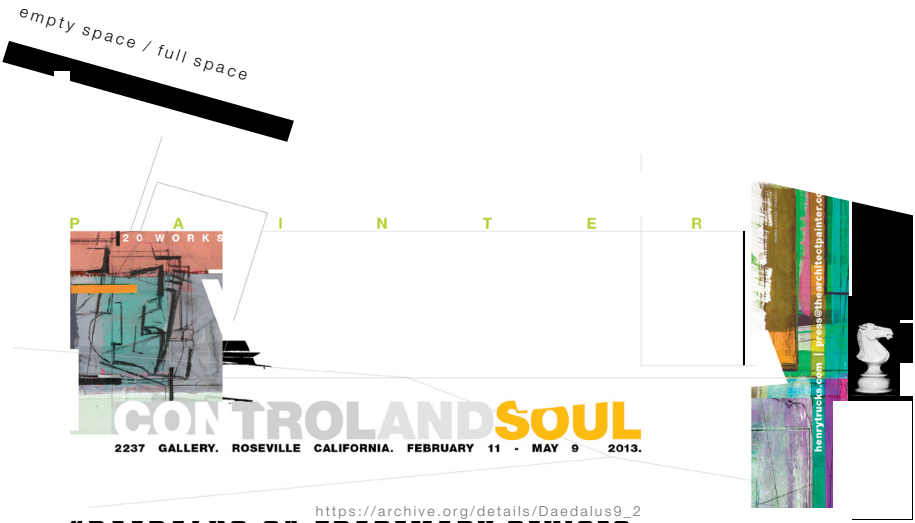
VIEW & MEANING

SIGNIFICANT**SPACEMAKING**

A, B, C . . .

< SITE PLAN R&D. THE DAEDALUS PROJECT

empty space / full space



https://archive.org/details/Daedalus9_2

"DAEDALUS 9" TRADEMARK DEVICES:

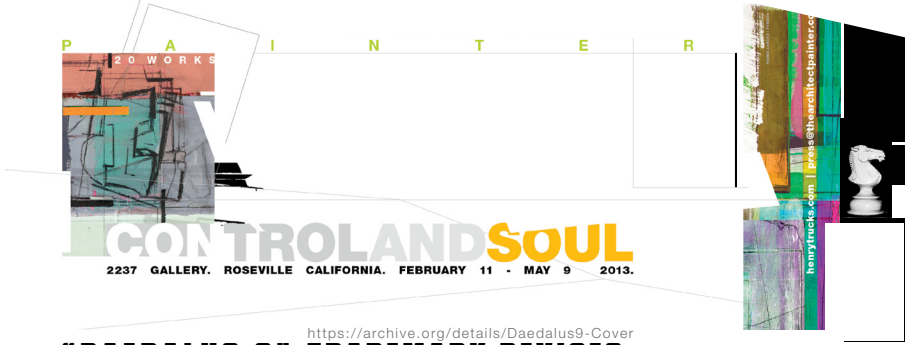
TERMS COINED BY JEF7REY HILDNER | THE ARCHITECT PAINTER

1. **Negative Cubism**
2. **Significant Space**
3. ***Empty/Full**
4. **Jigsaw Design**
5. **Control and Soul**
6. **Pretty and Gritty**
7. **Figure|Field**
8. **Move & Meaning**
9. **Form & Story**

"PRECISELY BECAUSE IT IS THE FAMILIAR WAY, IT IS NOT THE ARTISTIC WAY
—VICTOR SHKLOVSKY, "ART AS DEVICE" 1917

SIGNIFICANT SPACE | EMPTY SPACE / FULL SPACE (MORE EMPTY THAN FULL) A

empty space / full space



https://archive.org/details/Daedalus9-Cover

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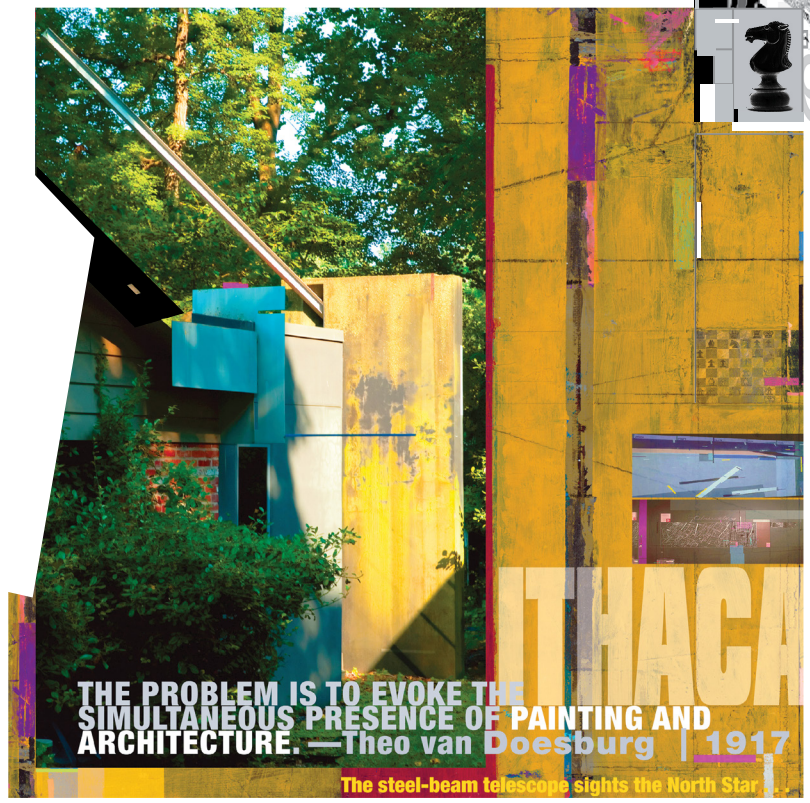
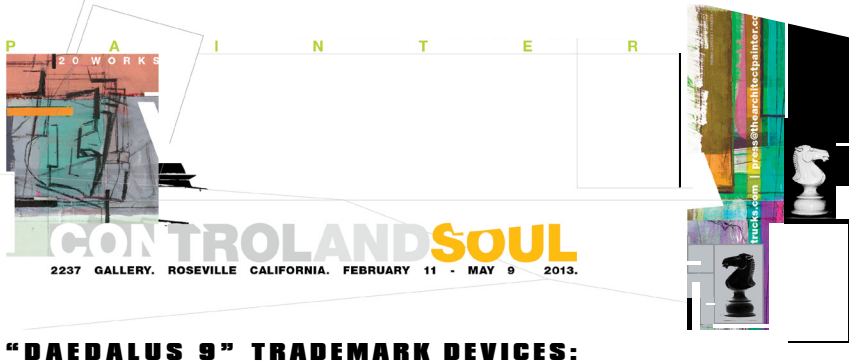


FORM & STORY MANIFESTO 1 | 1991–1996

DANTE | TELESCOPE HOUSE

SIGNIFICANT SPACE | EMPTY SPACE / FULL SPACE: BLACK KNIGHT MOVE 1 **B**

empty space / full space



"DAEDALUS 9" TRADEMARK DEVICES:

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"PRECISELY

BECAUSE IT IS THE

FAMILIAR WAY,

IT IS NOT THE

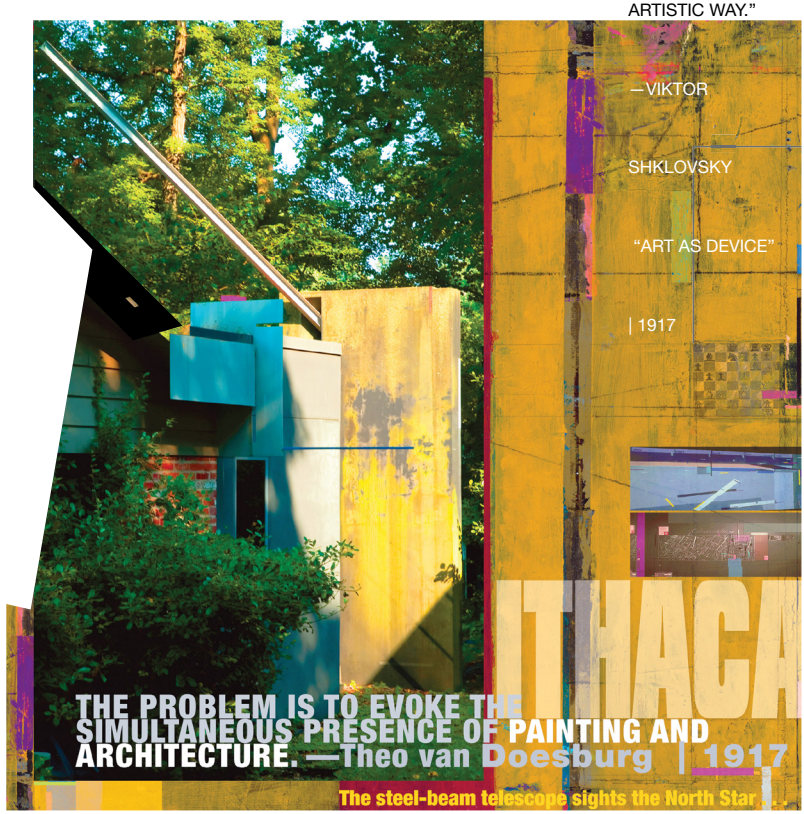
ARTISTIC WAY."

—VIKTOR

SHKLOVSKY

"ART AS DEVICE"

| 1917



FORM & STORY MANIFESTO 1 | 1991–1996

D A N T E | T E L E S C O P E H O U S E

SIGNIFICANT SPACE | EMPTY SPACE / FULL SPACE: BLACK KNIGHT MOVE 2 **C**

MOVE & MEANING | FORM & STORY

DANTE|TELESCOPE HOUSE

AKA THE ZLOWE HOUSE, SILVER SPRING, MD | 1991–1996

In Dante|Telescope House, I probe architecture's metaphysical structure. I seek fusion of the visible and invisible "to evoke the simultaneous presence of painting and architecture" (as architect-painter Theo van Doesburg put it in 1917) and to evoke the origins of architecture in literature and astronomy, signified by "Dante" and "Telescope." I reach back into architecture's past past when the first buildings were books, the first books were buildings, and the first architects—astronomer-priests—marked out sacred space for the observation of reality.

DANTE: *everlasting, enduring*

observatory | chess

1:4:9 OBSERVATORY CHESS MURAL

THE AESTHETIC & SYMBOLIC RECTANGLE

In my work, I explore the theme of the rectangle, simultaneously Aesthetic & Symbolic. I play what I call the Visual Chess Game of Move & Meaning—the basis for a Silver Knight Architecture of Form & Story, which I have so far most fully realized in a project that I completed over 20 years ago, Dante | Telescope House.

DANTE|TELESCOPE HOUSE

observatory | chess

1:4:9 OBSERVATORY CHESS MURAL

WHERE AM I?
The steel-beam Telescope (a shard of ancient suns) cuts through the Dante Monolith and sights the North Star.

The artist's function is the mythologization of the environment and the world.

— Joseph Campbell

DANTE

WHERE AM I?
The steel-beam Telescope (a shard of ancient suns) cuts through the Dante Monolith and sights the North Star.

The artist's function is the mythologization of the environment and the world.

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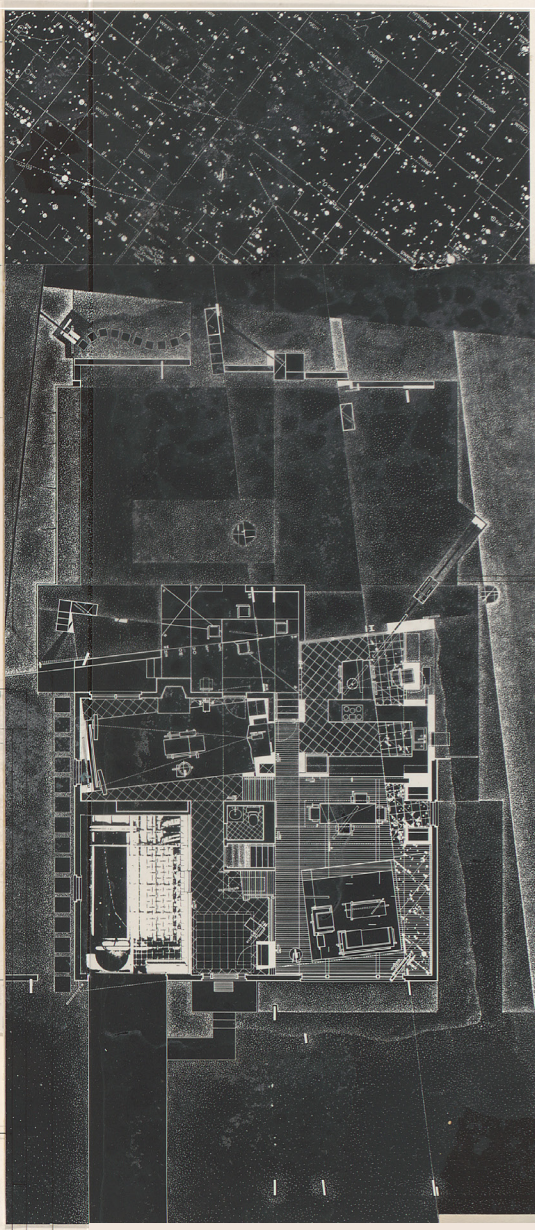
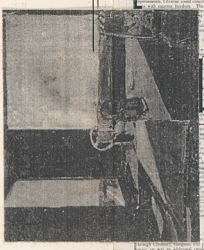
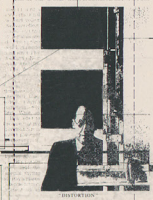
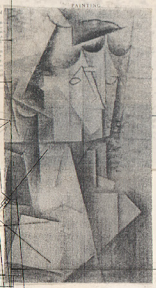


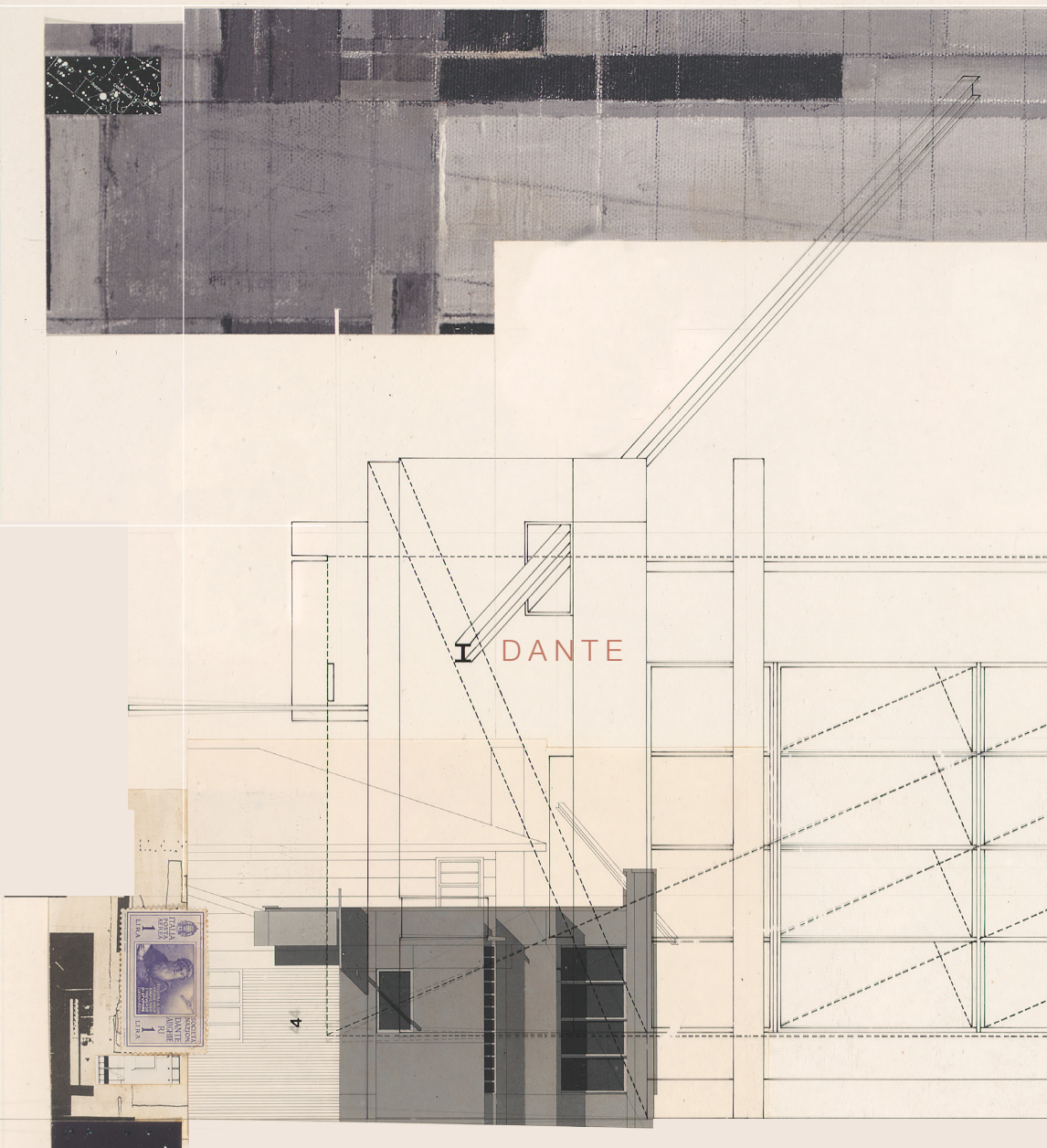


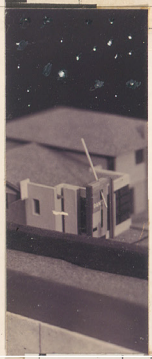




N

A BUILDING IS A SIGNIFICANT PLACE *TO BE.*





ARCHITECTURE FREE IS SCULPTURE

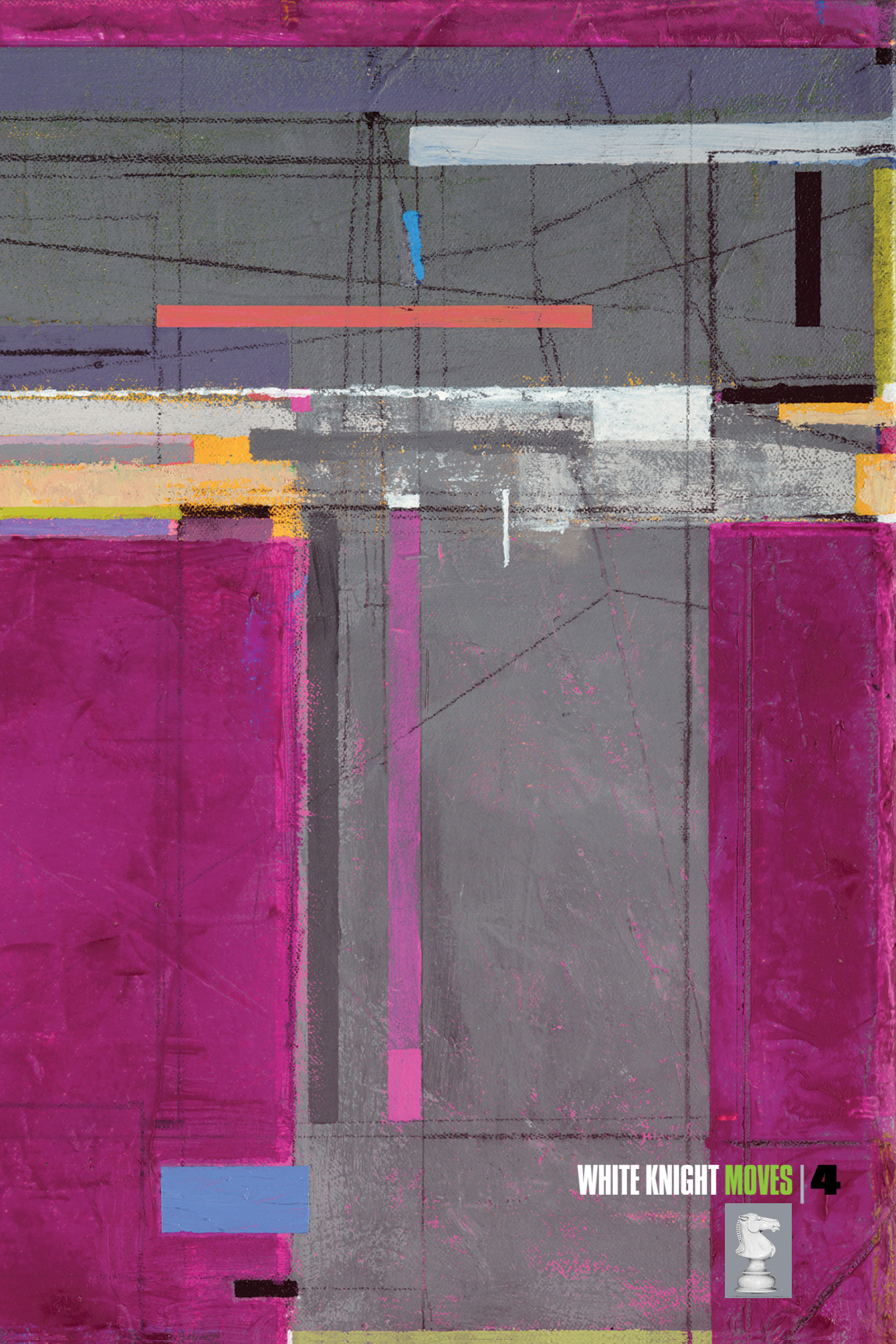
DANTE | TELESCOPE HOUSE

Architecture is a story told through a building—
A brave reconstruction of the world,
A bold expression of our imagination that evokes our concept of being,
because the word *building* derives from an ancient Indo-European word that means "to be."
So architecture is an ontological quest . . .
A vision quest to create a Significant Place to be.

1:4:9 OBSERVATORY CHESS MURAL, TELESCOPE WALL LAMP, AND NORTH STAR TELESCOPE RUG

Observatory

DESIGN IS A GAME, AND A GAME HAS RULES.



WHITE KNIGHT MOVES | 4

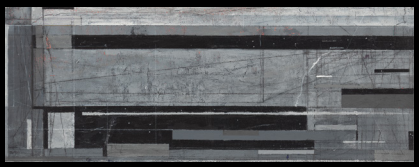
WHITE KNIGHT MOVES

WHITE KNIGHT ARCHITECTURE PRESENTS THE AESTHETIC STAGE SET FOR THE DRAMA OF LIFE.

A PHYSICAL WORLD OF MATERIALS, LIGHT, AND SPACE

Summed up by the most famous definition of architecture:
“Architecture is the correct and magnificent play of masses brought together in light.” —Le Corbusier

FORM



WHITE KNIGHT ARCHITECTURE: THE AESTHETIC LANGUAGE OF SPACE AND FORM

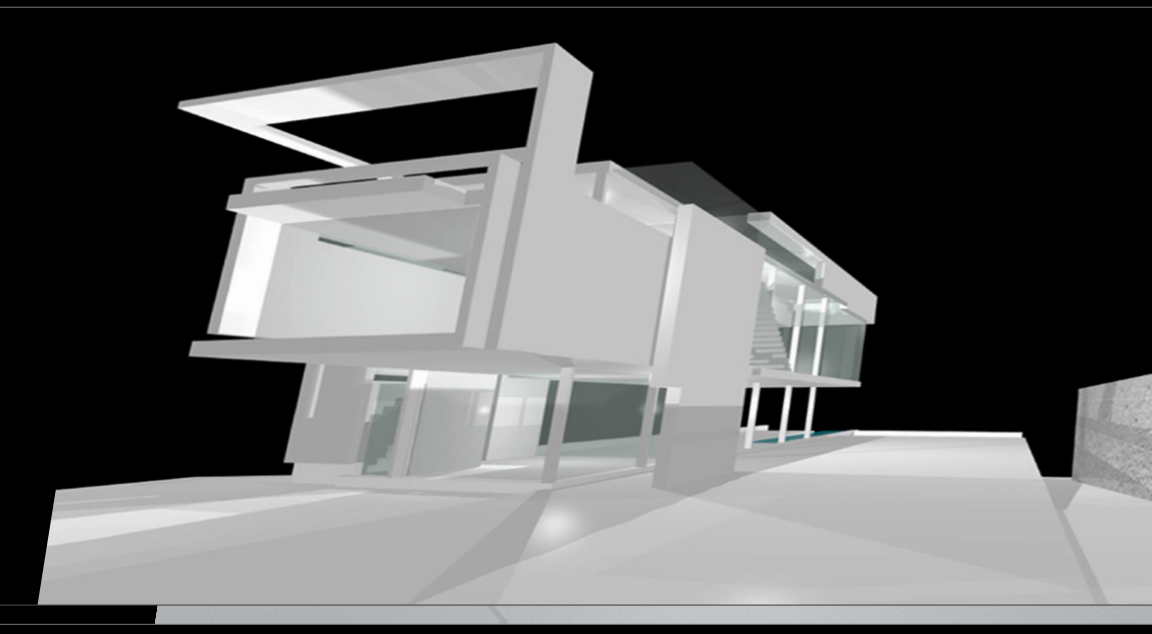
ON THE CHESSBOARD OF THE AESTHETIC RECTANGLE.

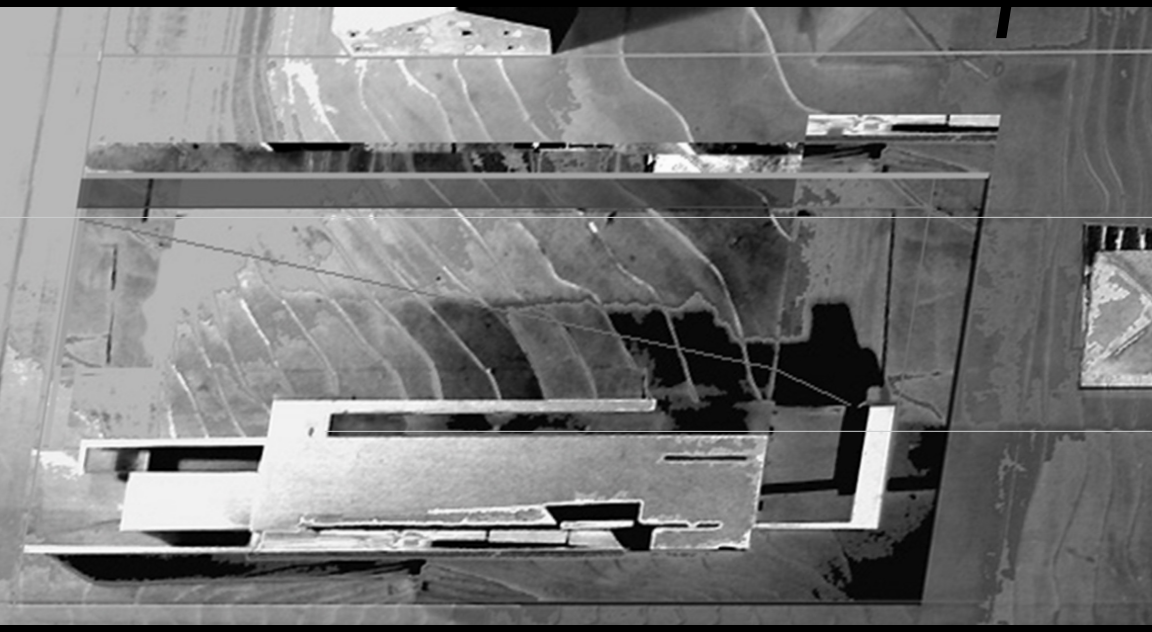
DIEBENKORN CHESS HOUSE | AKA ORION CINEMA HOUSE

WHITE KNIGHT ARCHITECTURE PRESENTS
THE AESTHETIC STAGE SET FOR THE DRAMA OF LIFE: FORM
A PHYSICAL WORLD OF MATERIALS, LIGHT, AND SPACE

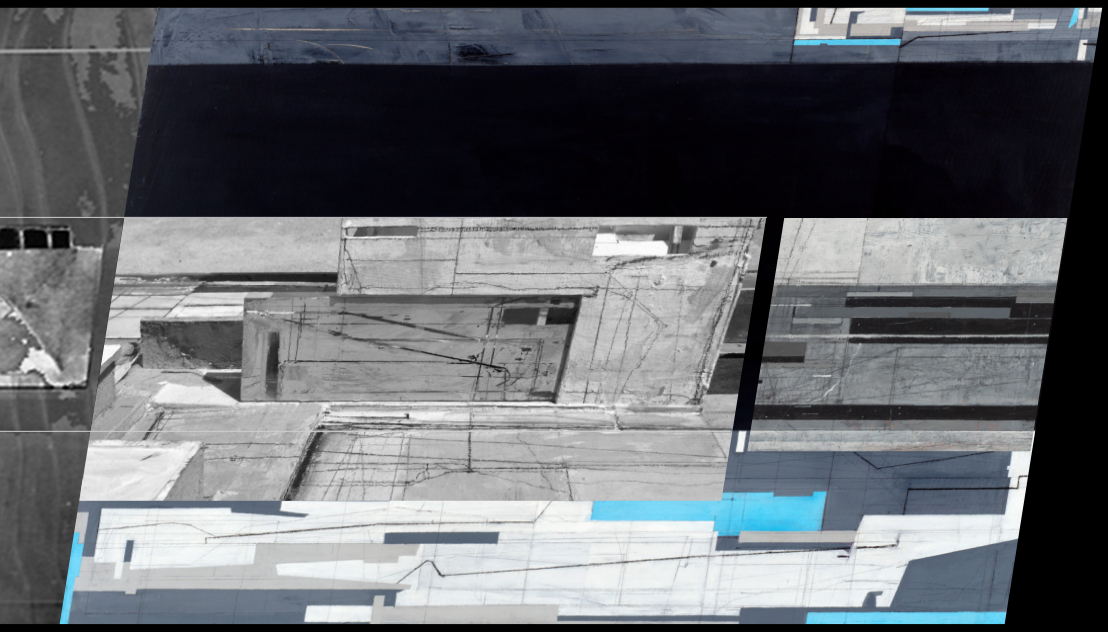
The problem is to evoke the simultaneous presence of painting and architecture. — Theo van Doesburg | 1917

DIEBENKORN CHESS HOUSE | AKA ORION CINEMA HOUSE





DIEBENKORN CHESS HOUSE | AKA ORION CINEMA HOUSE



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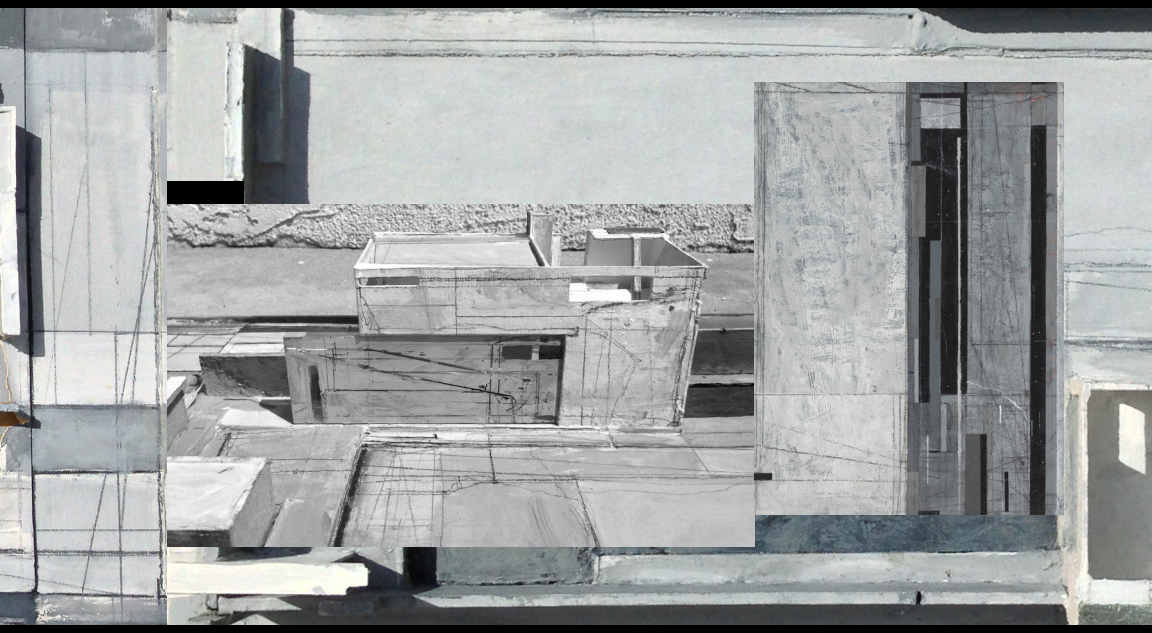
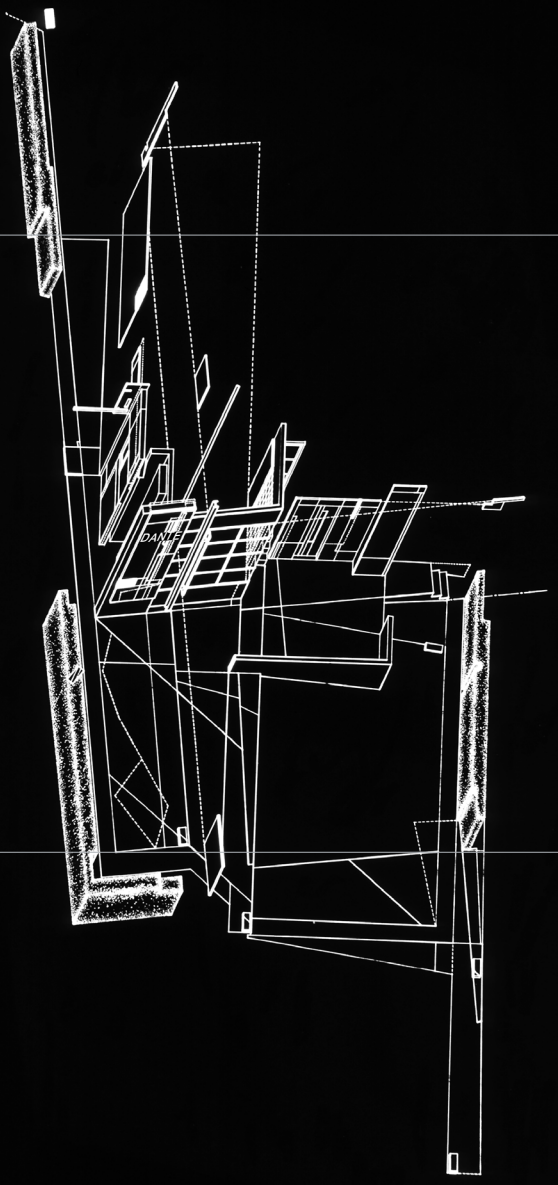
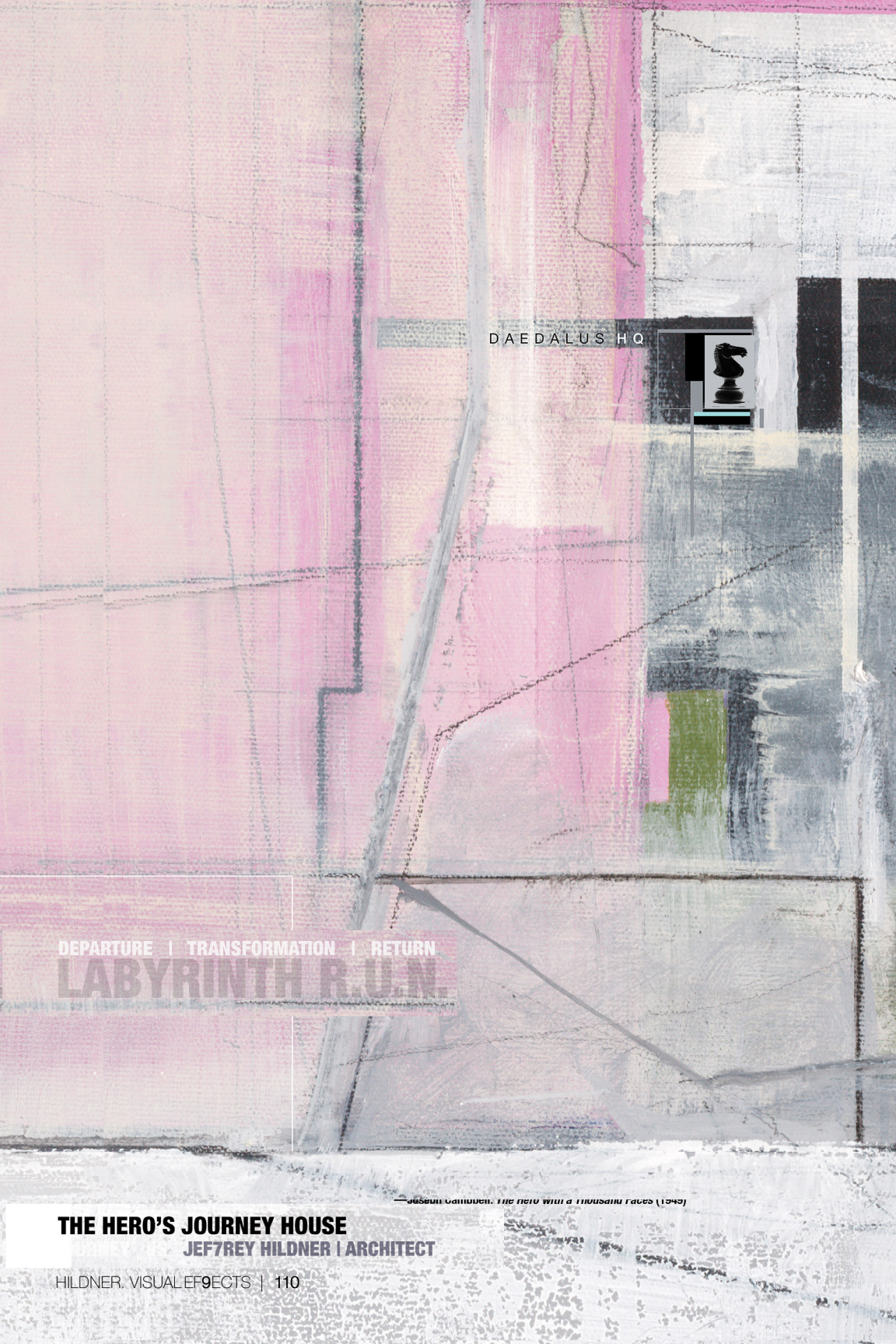


HOUSE OF THE WHITE KNIGHT | (AKA ACROPOLIS)
1998. Acrylic on canvas + pencil (grease, charcoal, graphite). 36 × 60 in. Private Collection, Boston, Massachusetts


DANTE

DANTE | TELESCOPE HOUSE

WHITE KNIGHT ARCHITECTURE PRESENTS
THE AESTHETIC STAGE SET FOR THE DRAMA OF LIFE: FORM
A PHYSICAL WORLD OF MATERIALS, LIGHT, AND SPACE



—Joseph Campbell: *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* (1949)

THE HERO'S JOURNEY HOUSE

JEF7REY HILDNER | ARCHITECT

HOME

BLACK KNIGHT MEANINGS

DAEDALUS

BLACK KNIGHT ARCHITECTURE PRESENTS THE SYMBOLIC STAGE SET FOR THE DRAMA OF LIFE— A STORY TOLD THROUGH A BUILDING.

AN EMOTIONAL WORLD OF SYMBOLS, METAPHORS, AND MEANINGS

Black Knight Architecture conveys Significant Symbolic Meaning beyond the Abstract Meaning of Form, triggering thoughts and feelings inspired by . . .

STORY

"The road to safety will open first from where you least expect it."—Virgil, *The Aeneid*

"Gray Square, Brook, and Smoke"—
Black Knight becoming Silver Knight . . .

BLACK KNIGHT ARCHITECTURE:
THE SYMBOLIC LANGUAGE OF MEANING AND STORY

ON THE CHESSBOARD OF THE SYMBOLIC RECTANGLE

Architecture is a story told through a building.

THE SYMBOLIC RECTA

Meaning

DAEDALUS

I paint because painting allows pure artistic freedom. No client or contractor factors into the equation. No editor makes changes. Time and money don't shape the work. I strive to honor the timeless slogan of the pioneer-artist: "My work, done my way." And through painting, I seek to find the form and space of my architecture.

But in truth, I seek more: to find not only the aesthetic form-and-space "Move-system" (Form) of my architecture but also to find the symbolic "Meaning-system" (Story) of my architecture. Painting is a quest to discover an architecture of Form & Story.

A wall is a canvas. And a canvas is a wall.

NGLE

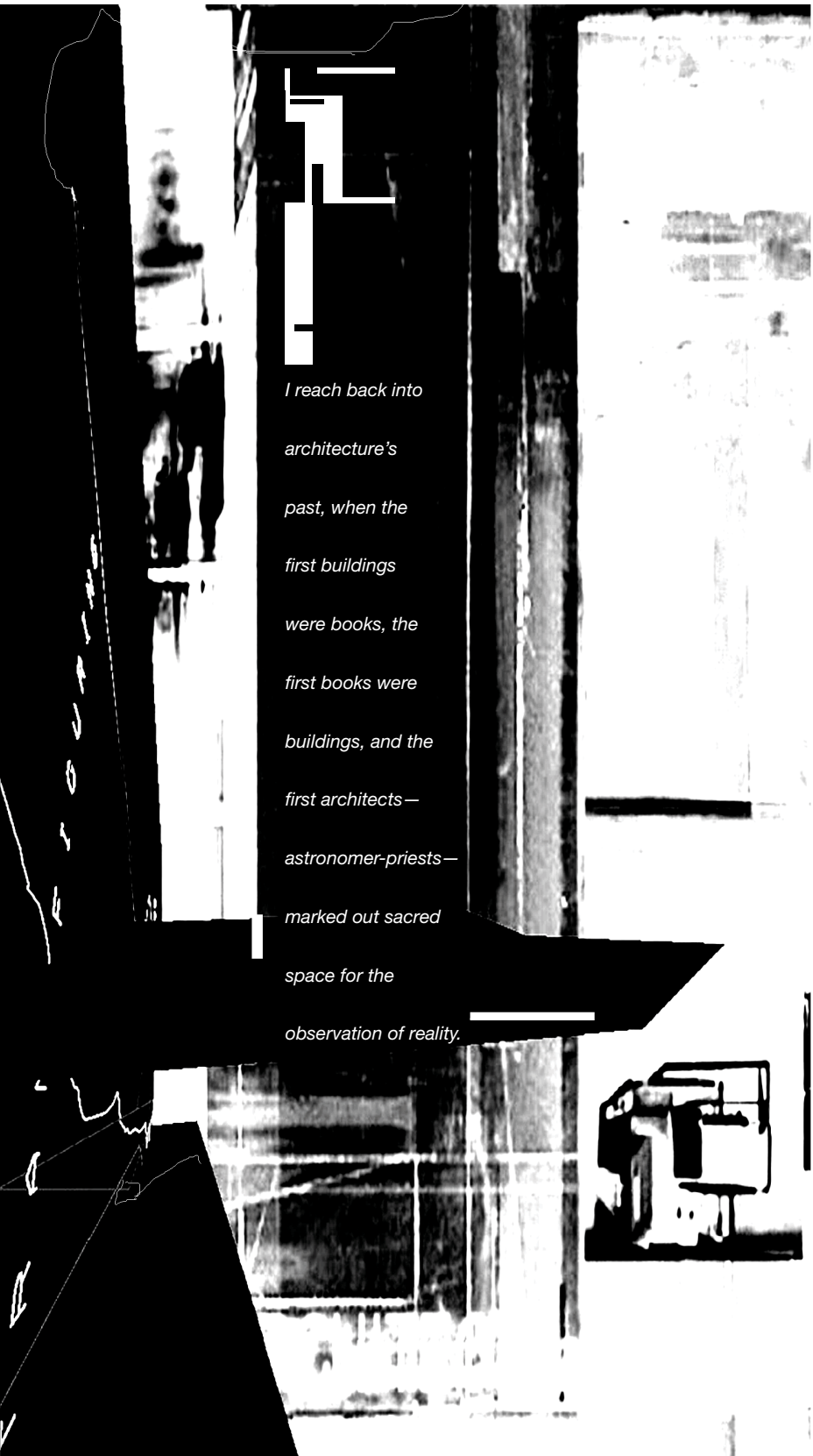
Acrylic and collage on wood, 1990. 14 x 18 in. Amplified Digital collage, 2017.

HERO'S JOURNEY

Architecture is a story told through a building.

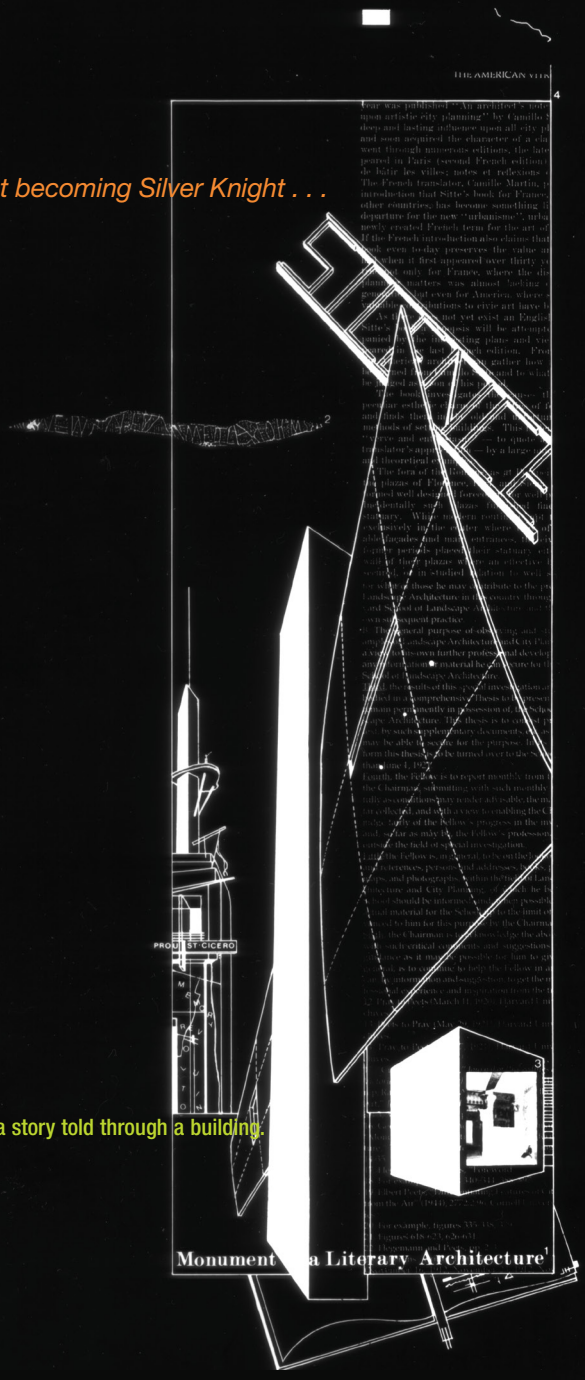
Black Knight becoming Silver Knight . . .

BLACK KNIGHT ARCHITECTURE PRESENTS
THE SYMBOLIC STAGE SET FOR THE DRAMA OF LIFE: STORY
AN EMOTIONAL WORLD OF SYMBOLS, METAPHORS, AND MEANINGS



I reach back into architecture's past, when the first buildings were books, the first books were buildings, and the first architects—astronomer-priests—marked out sacred space for the observation of reality.

Black Knight becoming Silver Knight . . .



Architecture is a story told through a building.

BLACK KNIGHT ARCHITECTURE PRESENTS
THE SYMBOLIC STAGE SET FOR THE DRAMA OF LIFE: STORY
AN EMOTIONAL WORLD OF SYMBOLS, METAPHORS, AND MEANINGS

SILVER KNIGHT FACADE

My Hood.
Now there's a house!
Wow.
California Spanish Mission Bliss.
3742.
Shipshape presentation: look and feel . . . building and landscape . . .
Note especially:

1. KNIGHT'S MOVE FACADE: "L"-Move (diagonal) relationship between the front door and balcony door
2. FACADE AS WALL (Ceremonial Wall)—and Wall as Chessboard: simultaneously an Aesthetic Rectangle & Symbolic Rectangle, presenting the pleasing play of funky subtle expressive asymmetrical Moves (left and right, bottom and top, shallow and deep) & metaphorical Meanings evoked by the calligraphy of elements (bench, bars, and bell, urns and lanterns) we associate with home as sanctuary and home as church, fortress, billboard, castle, secret labyrinth, headquarters, mission . . .
3. EDWARD HOPPER BALCONY . . . catching the western light—wouldn't I like to be right there . . . (lucked out on timing of photo!)
4. Throwback indigenous architecture presenting smart, satisfying, knockout expression of . . . CONTROL AND SOUL
5. and the architecture chess game of . . . MOVE & MEANING:
6. In which that WALL AS CANVAS makes us feel how true that ARCHITECTURE PRESENTS THE STAGE SET FOR THE DRAMA OF LIFE.
7

LABYRINTH

ARCHITECTURE IS THE STAGE SET FOR THE DRAMA OF LIFE—

THE DRAMA OF LIFE AND DEATH

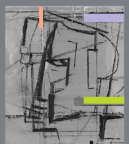
ARCHITECTURE IS A STORY TOLD THROUGH A BUILDING

ARCHITECTURE IS A METAPHOR

FOR THE FORM & STORY OF THE WORLD

A METAPHOR FOR OUR LABYRINTH R.U.N.

The deeper aesthetic dimension of art lies not in absence of meaning but in multiplicity and density of meanings.



SILVER KNIGHT ARCHITECTURE PRESENTS THE AESTHETIC & SYMBOLIC STAGE SET FOR THE DRAMA OF LIFE—A STORY TOLD THROUGH A BUILDING COMPOSED OF SIGNIFICANT FORM.

A PHYSICAL WORLD OF MATERIALS, LIGHT, AND SPACE &
AN EMOTIONAL WORLD OF SYMBOLS, METAPHORS, AND MEANINGS

Silver Knight Architecture of surpassing quality integrates an original and profound Abstract Aesthetic System and Symbolic Image System, conjuring a screenplay written in the physical materials of construction, light, and space that presents what Robert McKee defines as Story: "a creative demonstration of truth."

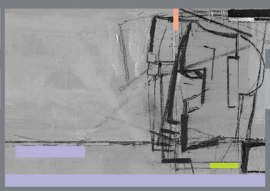
Silver Knight Architecture values equally both sides of the Chess Game of Art:

FORM & STORY

tapp

EARLY COVER DESIGN: FRONT COVER AND SPINE

VISUAL EF9ECTS



V I S U A L E F 9 E C T S

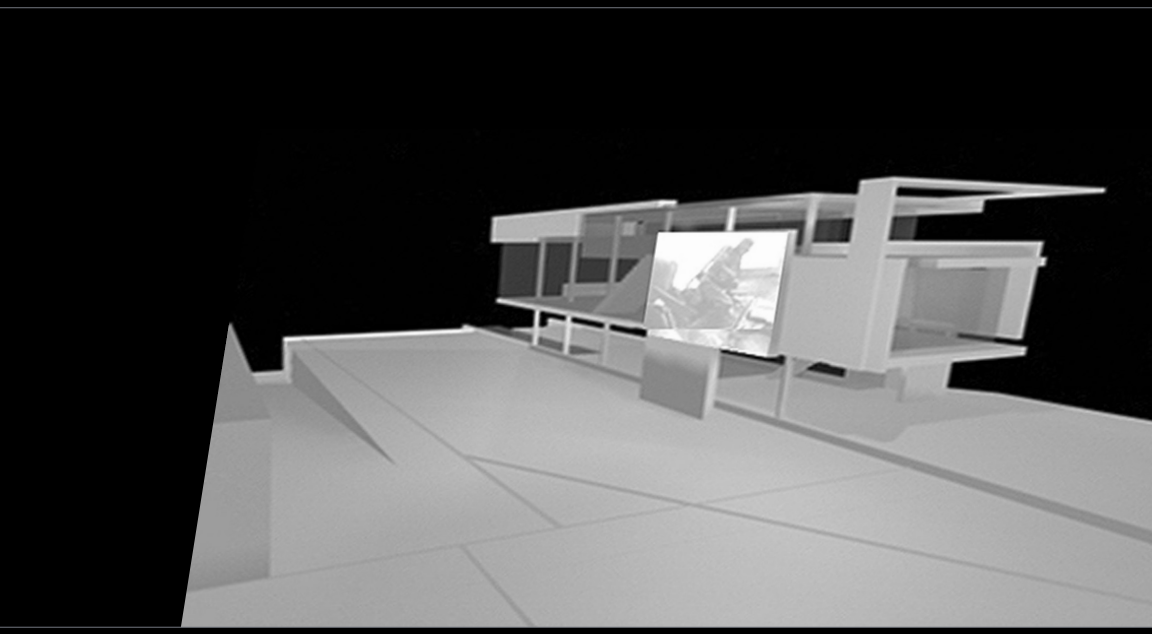
ARCHITECTURE AND THE CHESS GAME OF FORM & STORY

JEF7REY HILDNER

MOVE & FORM MEANING

NEW FACADE for the Spanish Department, Columbia University, 116th & Broadway, NYC

Space can be full, or space can be empty.



SILVER KNIGHT ARCHITECTURE PRESENTS THE AESTHETIC & SYMBOLIC STAGE SET
FOR THE DRAMA OF LIFE—
A STORY TOLD THROUGH A BUILDING COMPOSED OF SIGNIFICANT FORM

PLAYED ON THE CHESSBOARD OF THE AESTHETIC & SYMBOLIC RECTANGLE

PRINCETON STUDIO 1987 | "GRAY SQUARE, BROOK, AND SMOKE"

In my former Princeton studio, known as Brook House, I explore the theme of the rectangle, simultaneously aesthetic and symbolic, treating the wall as an expressive canvas for the first time. I evoke the brook that runs through the ravine on the left and the smoke that plumes from the chimney on the right by drawing their undulating outline along this horizontal wall-canvas, which I titled, "Gray Square, Brook, and Smoke." By contrast, I insert into the landscape of this personal representation of Nature a universal symbol of Culture—a square. On this stucco chessboard, the White Knight of Geometry (Form) battles—poetically speaking—the Black Knight of Metaphor (Story). They unite to become the Silver Knight. Both sides win.

This project paved the way for my next wall-as-canvas project: Dante | Telescope House.

The Chess Game of Art

WALL AS CANVAS. The Aesthetic Rectangle | The Symbolic Rectangle. Move & Meaning | Form & Story

MOVE & MEANING | FORM & STORY

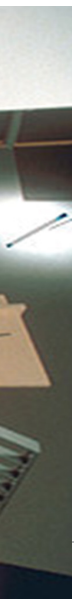
In Dante | Telescope House, I probe architecture's metaphysical structure. I seek fusion of the visible and invisible "to evoke the simultaneous presence of painting and architecture" (as architect-painter Theo van Doesburg put it in 1917) and to evoke the origins of architecture in literature and astronomy, signified by "Dante" and "Telescope." I reach back into architecture's past, when the first buildings were books, the first books were buildings, and the first architects—astronomer-priests—marked out sacred space for the observation of reality.

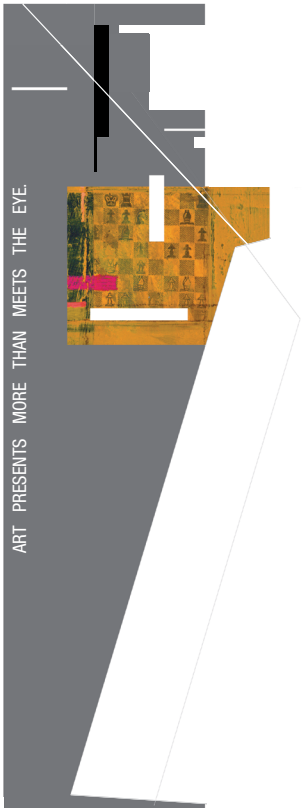
DANTE: *everlasting, enduring*

The Chess Game of Art

Sight along the steel-beam Telescope on a clear night . . . and you can see the North Star.

ARCHITECTURE ORIENTS US IN THE WORLD — AND INSPIRES US TO LOOK DEEP INTO THE NATURE OF REALITY.




ART PRESENTS MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE.

FORM & STORY

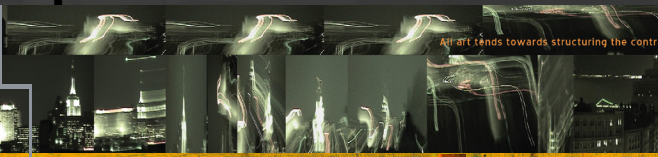
Dante | Telescope House

WHERE AM I?

The steel-beam Telescope
(a shard of ancient suns)
cuts through the Dante Monolith
and sights the North Star.

FORM&STORY

DAEDALUS



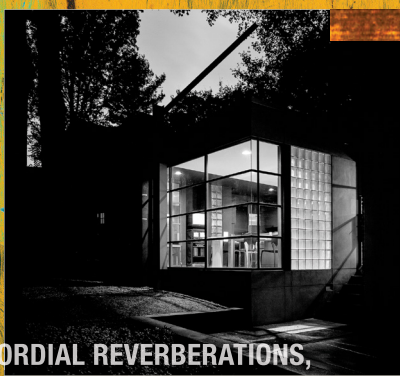
ARCHITECTURE IS THE WORLD IN A BUILDING.

ARCHITECTURE BEGAN AS A SEARCH FOR TRUTH—

prettyandgritty

AS AN AESTHETIC & SYMBOLIC EXPRESSION OF A VISION QUEST TO UNRIDDLE

THE FORM & STORY OF THE WORLD.



FOR ARCHITECTS WHO, TODAY, FEEL THESE PRIMORDIAL REVERBERATIONS,

THAT VISION QUEST CONTINUES . . .

ARCHITECTURE IS THE RED PILL. BUILD BRAVE. BUILD THE TRUTH.

"I want to stay as close to the edge as I can without going over. Out on the edge you see all kinds of things you can't see from the center."

—Kurt Vonnegut, *Player Piano*

An architect wields three secret powers—2. the power to transform us

Middle Game

The artist's function
is the mythologization of the environment and the world.
— Joseph Campbell

THE KNIHGT

THE MOUNTAIN

THE HOUSE

THE KNIGHT, THE MOUNTAIN, AND THE HOUSE: FLORENCE TALKS | 7

THE KNIGT

VISUAL EF9ECTS

The hardest thing to do in architecture is decide what you want the building to look like.

And Why.

FRAGMENT OF **DAEDALUS** | (AKA AENEAS : SELF-PORTRAIT : THE KNIGHT)
1996. Oil on canvas in aluminum frame + pencil (grease, charcoal, graphite).
24.625 x 38.5 in. Private Collection, Boston, Masachusetts

CC Sharada Prasad CS, "Shivling and Meru," 2014. Photo via https://commons.wikimedia.org

VISUAL EF9ECTS

On February 19, 2016, I presented the following 40-minute talk at the Symposium on Formalism, led by Associate Professor Richard Rosa, Director of the Syracuse University School of Architecture Program in Florence. I titled the talk, "VISUAL EF9ECTS."

(See https://soa.syr.edu/live/files/268-the-f-word-formalism-poster.)

That talk inspired this book.

THE KNIGHT

1

[FADE IN]

V I S U A L E F 9 E C T S

9
V I S U A L E F E C T S

[PROLOGUE: START]

I designed this talk for an architecture theory symposium held on February 19, 2016, and led by Richard Rosa, director of the Syracuse School of Architecture program in Florence.

9

V I S U A L E F E C T S

Courtesy Richard Rosa, "The *F* Word," 2016 (Photo of Brigitte Bardot via *Vanity Fair*).

5

Richard called the Florence symposium, "The *F* Word."
And he featured in one of his promos for the symposium, Brigitte Bardot.
Playfully signaling that the F-word in this case *doesn't* actually refer to . . . Florence.

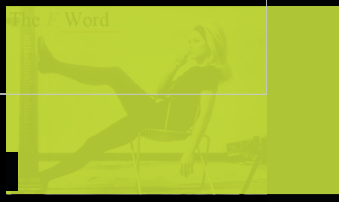
9

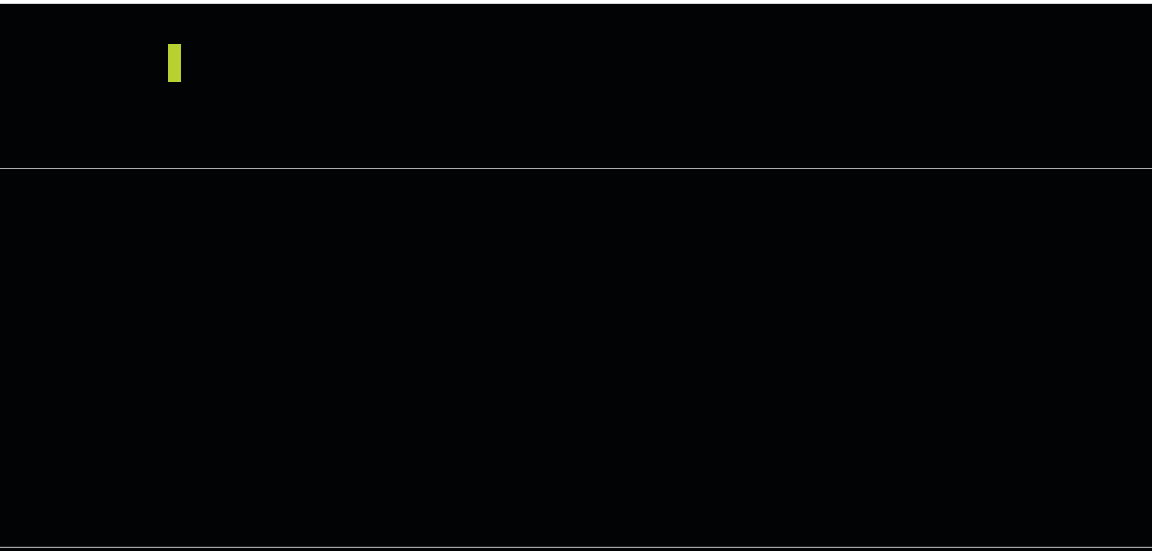
“F” refers to Formalism.
And that symposium focused on this thorny topic and basic questions like, What is Formalism?
Does it represent a negative or positive approach to design today?
And if we choose to adopt a point of view other than Formalism as we architect our buildings then what would we call that point of view?
In other words, if you’re not a Formalist, why not? And what are you?

And my talk today is an expanded version of the talk I gave at that symposium.

When I think Formalism . . . well,

FORMALI9M





© Boston Globe. Craig F. Walker, "Harvard Square," 2015. Photo via www.bostonglobe.com

7
[PROLOGUE: END]

I think chess.

Years ago, Richard Rosa and I hung out at Harvard Square and played lots of speed chess.
He usually won.
That's Richard on the left, me on the right. (No. Not us. Comic relief.)

Speed chess?
Well, you put, say, 15 minutes on each clock for a half hour game. After you move, you hit your clock, which stops your clock and starts his. And you play till checkmate or your time runs out—because if your time runs out, you lose.

FORMALI9M

8

[OPENING | ACT 1: START]

The structure of a chess game mirrors the classical structure of storytelling laid out by Aristotle: beginning, middle, end.
And in chess, this three-act structure gets the labels opening, middle game, end game.

So I will open this game . . . by bringing out—

OPENING

9

My Nine . . . I mean . . .

OPENI9G

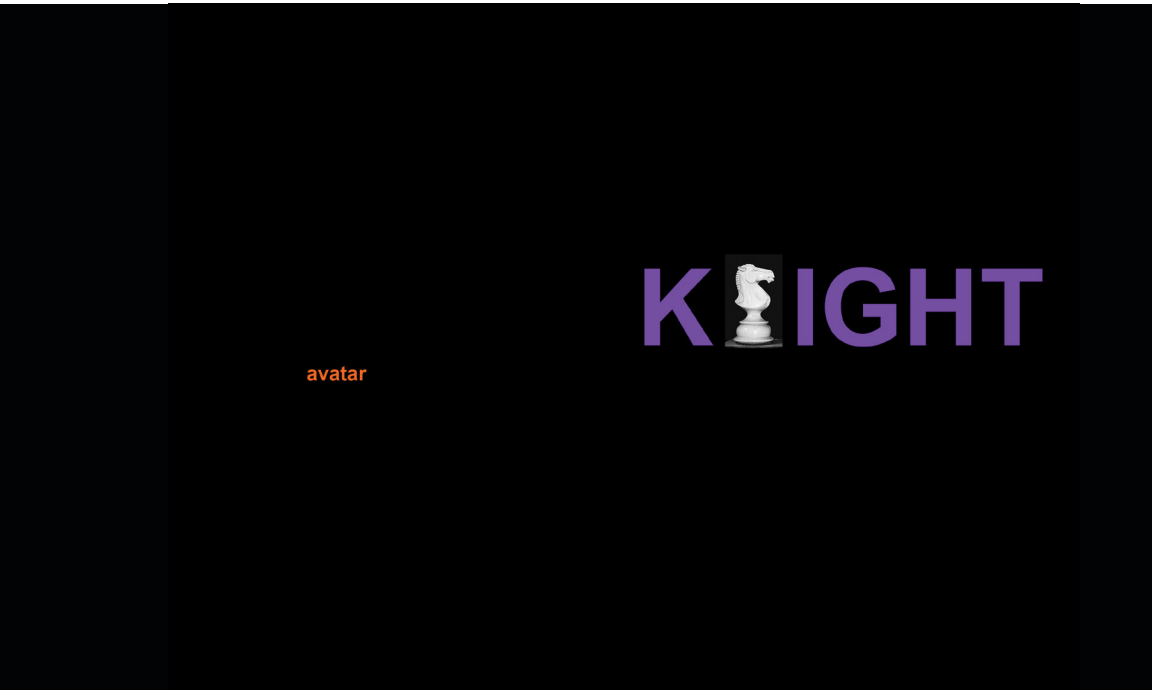
10

My Knight.

OPENING

11

The avatar of Formalism.

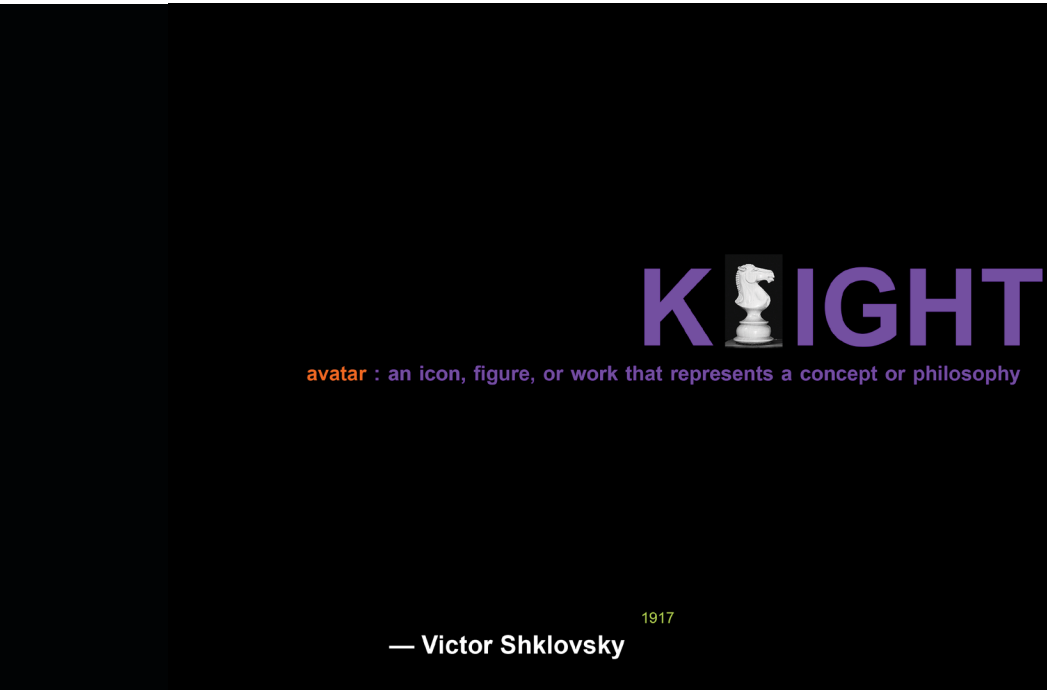

KNIGHT
avatar

Avatar?
An icon, figure, or work that represents a concept or philosophy.

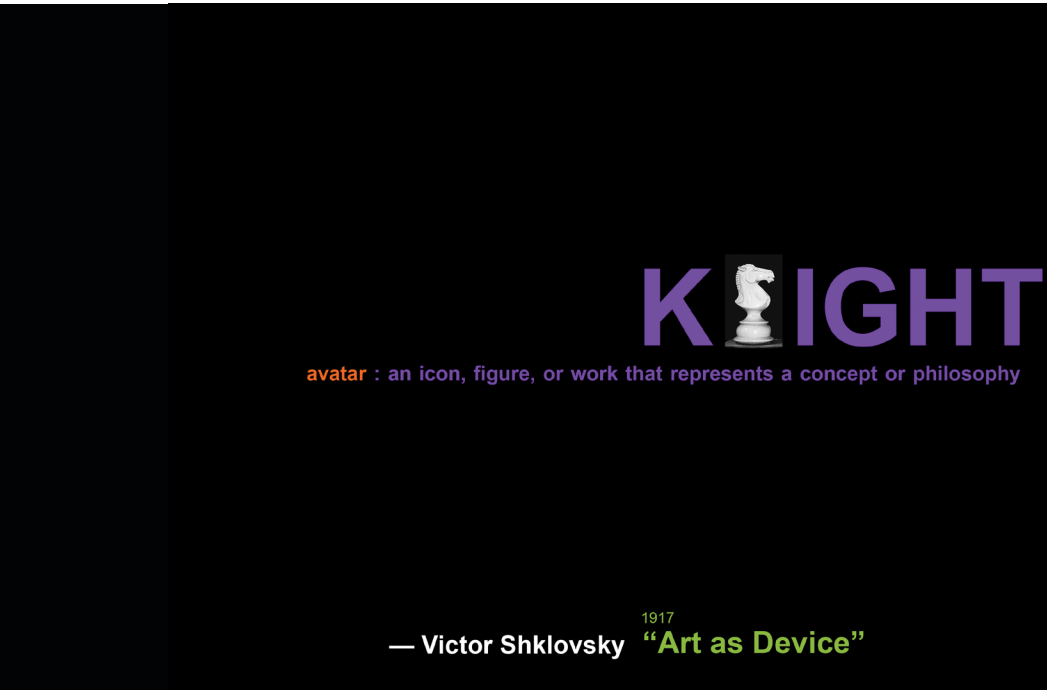
Well, at least the avatar of the brand of Formalism that plays a key role in my work: the brand linked to the Russian Formalist literary theorists of the 19-teens—

KNIGHT
avatar : an icon, figure, or work that represents a concept or philosophy

—led by Victor Shklovsky, who spelled out in his 1917 essay


KNIGHT
avatar : an icon, figure, or work that represents a concept or philosophy
1917
— Victor Shklovsky

“Art as Device”—this Formalist anthem:


KNIGHT
avatar : an icon, figure, or work that represents a concept or philosophy
— Victor Shklovsky
1917
“Art as Device”

“Precisely because it is the familiar way, it isn’t the artistic way.”
And later wrote, in 1923, the book that he titled . . .

“Precisely because it is the Familiar way, K IGHT

avatar : an icon, figure, or work that represents a concept or philosophy

it isn’t the artistic way.” — Victor Shklovsky 1917 “Art as Device”

16

Knight's Move.

“Precisely because it is the Familiar way,

KNIGHT

avatar : an icon, figure, or work that represents a concept or philosophy

it isn’t the artistic way.” — Victor Shklovsky

1923
Knight’s Move

1917
“Art as Device”

17

Because: Only the strange way is the artistic way.

Because: We sleepwalk through life, and only the strange way wakes us up—opens our eyes . . .
heightens our perception . . . of the world . . .
makes us see.

only the strange way is the artistic way

18

So you see, my name . . .

JEF7REYHILDNER
only the strange way is the artistic way

isn’t an ego trip.

JEF7REYHILDNER
only the strange way is the artistic way
Ego trip

It’s a “Formo” trip.

JEF7REYHILDNER

only the strange way is the artistic way

~~Ego trip~~

"Formo" trip

21

A Formalist riff.

JEF7REYHILDNER
only the strange way is the artistic way
ORMALIST RIFF

And that “7”?

7

23

That’s my knight.

JEFREYHILDNER

© Studio Babelsberg. Set technicians build a miniature set for *Metropolis*, 1927. Photo via http://serijskiubojica.tportal.hr

I'd like to take you backstage at KHQ.

7
KHQ

Behinds the scenes of *Metropolis*, 1927

25

Knight HeadQuarters in Sacramento, California.

7
KHQ

Courtesy www.GdeFon.com. Photo of "horse, knight, sword, armor."

You know, I've written a fair amount about Formalism.

(See https://archive.org/details/MoveMeaning—"FORMALISM: The Visual Chess Game of Move & Meaning"—for links to my published essays, conference papers, and book chapters.)

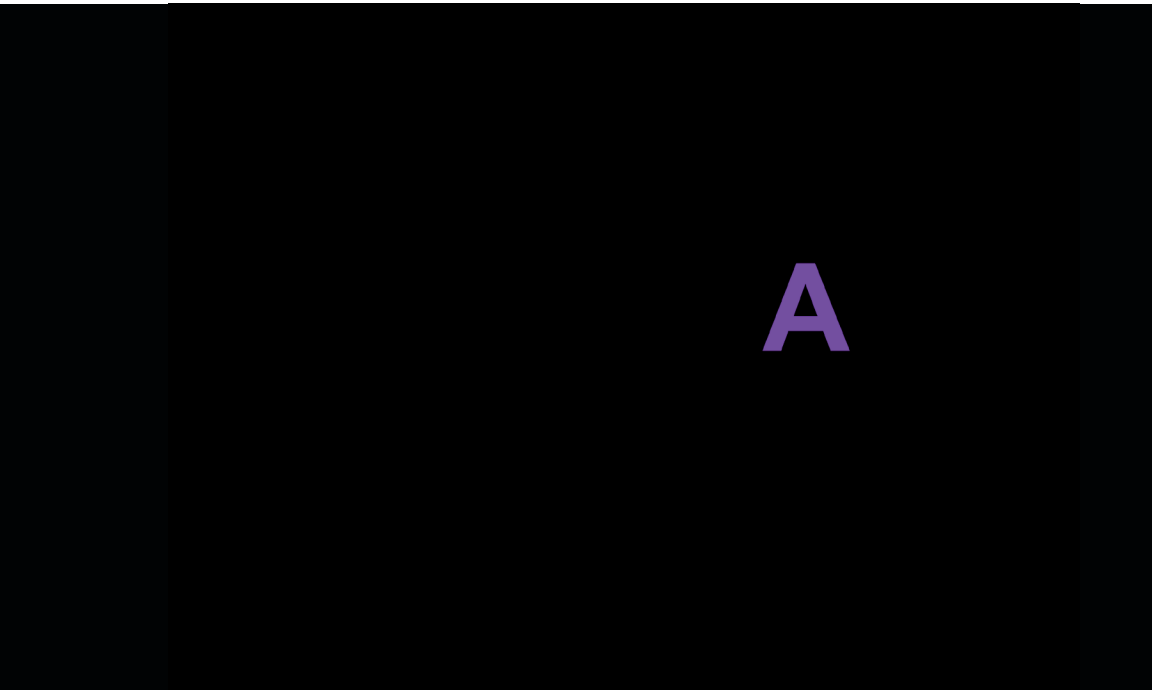
But today I want to come at it from a different angle.

7
KHQ

27

I’m going to take you backstage through a special door.

A


A

30

Mondrian’s “A.”

MONDRIAN

31

Mondriaan used to have two “A”s in his name.

MONDRIAAN
USED TO HAVE TWO "A"s IN HIS NAME.

⎚ Public domain. Piet Mondrian, *The Gray Tree*, 1911. Photo via https://www.wikiart.org

He also used to paint trees.

MONDRI

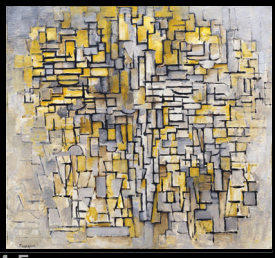
USED TO HAVE TWO “A”s IN HIS NAME.

© 2007 Mondrian/Holtzman Trust. Piet Mondrian, *Tableau No. 2/Composition No. VII*, 1913. Photo via www.guggenheim.org

33

Branches became straight lines, and trees became grids—

MONDRI



USED TO HAVE TWO “A”s IN HIS NAME.

⎚ Public Domain. Piet Mondrian, *Composition Trees II*, 1912–1913. Photo via https://commons.wikimedia.org

a mosaic of rectangles, more void than solid,

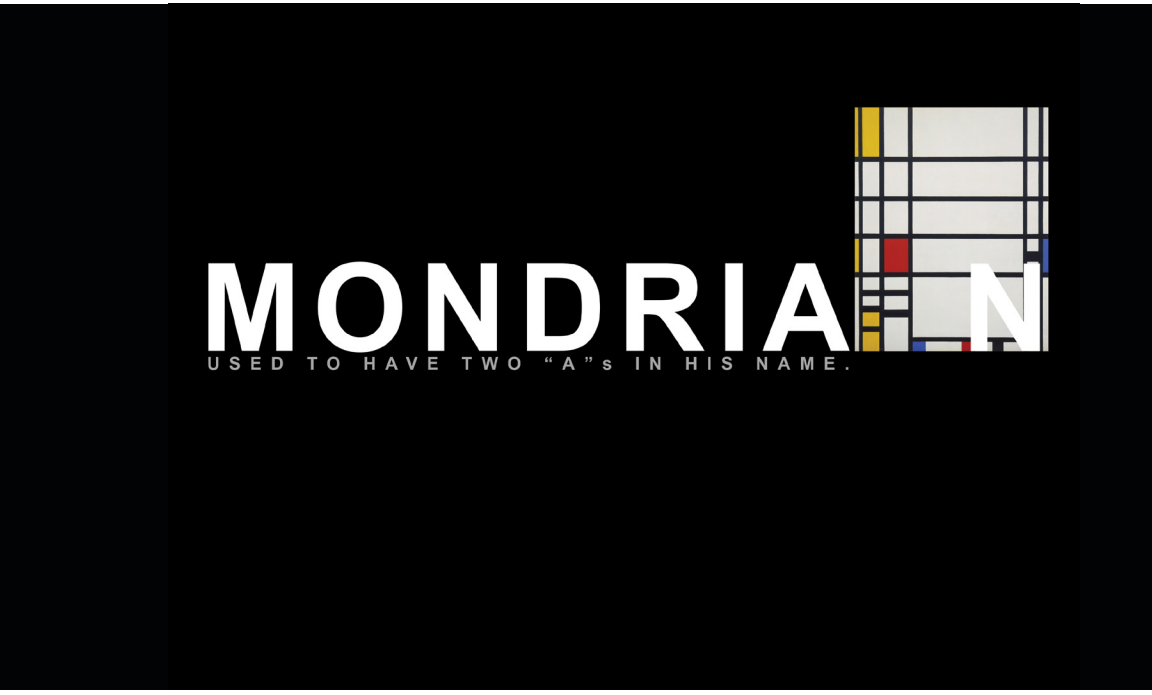
MONDRIAN

USED TO HAVE TWO "A"s IN HIS NAME.

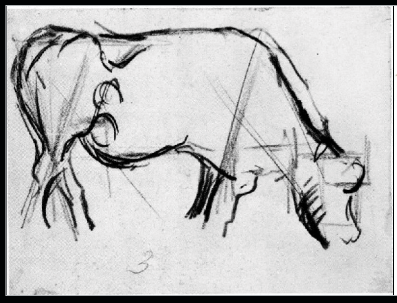
© MoMA. Piet Mondrian, *Trafalgar Square*, 1939-43. Photo via www.moma.org

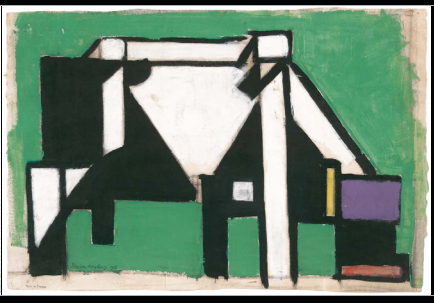
more empty than full.

Mondrian abstracted the world—
boiled it down to it roots: to its primaries—red, yellow, and blue . . .
black & white . . . and rectangles.


MONDRIAN
USED TO HAVE TWO "A"s IN HIS NAME.

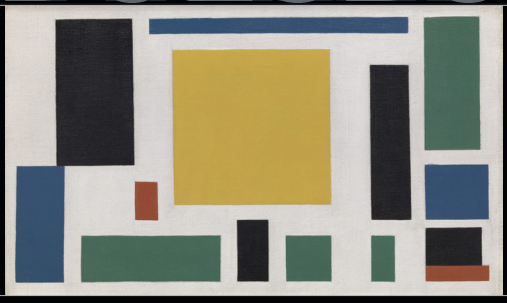
Left to right: ⊘ Public Domain. Theo van Doesburg, "Cow," 1918. Photo via https://commons.wikimedia.org | © MoMA. Theo van Doesburg, "Study for Composition (The Cow)," 1917. Photo via www.moma.org | © MoMA. Theo van Doesburg, *Composition VIII (The Cow)*, 1918. Photo via www.moma.org





SIDEBAR:
Mondrian's friend Theo Van Doesburg did to a cow what Mondrian did to a tree: turned it into a system of rectangles.

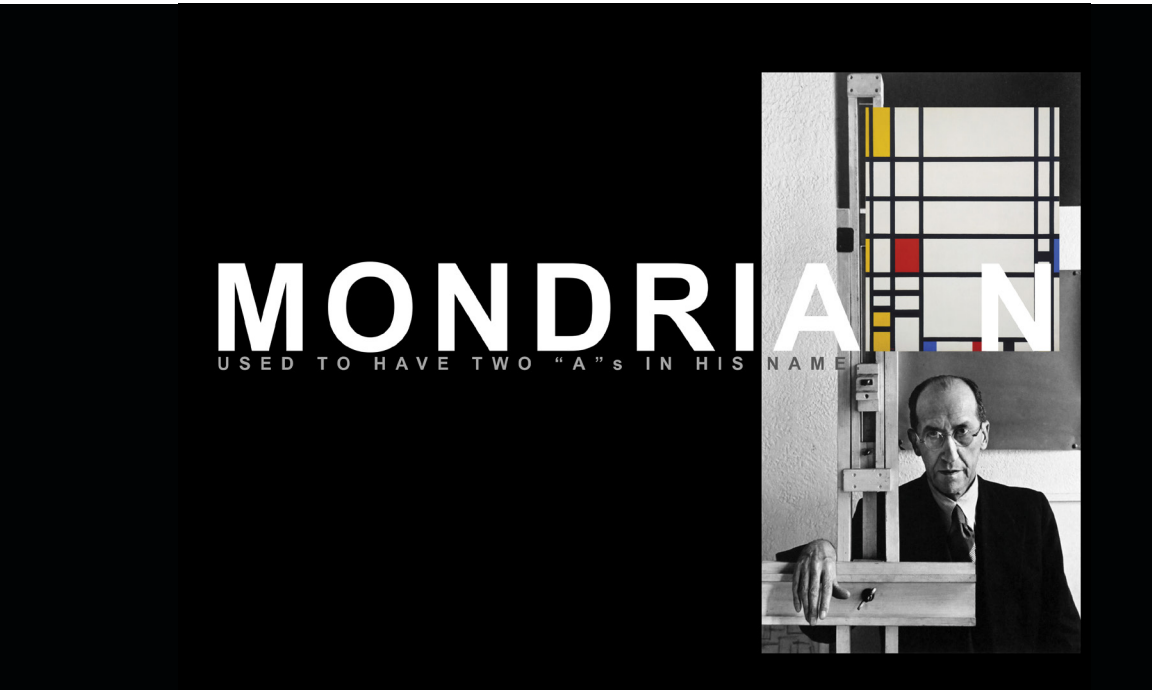
MONDRIAN VAN DOESBUR



A SYSTEM OF RECTANGLES

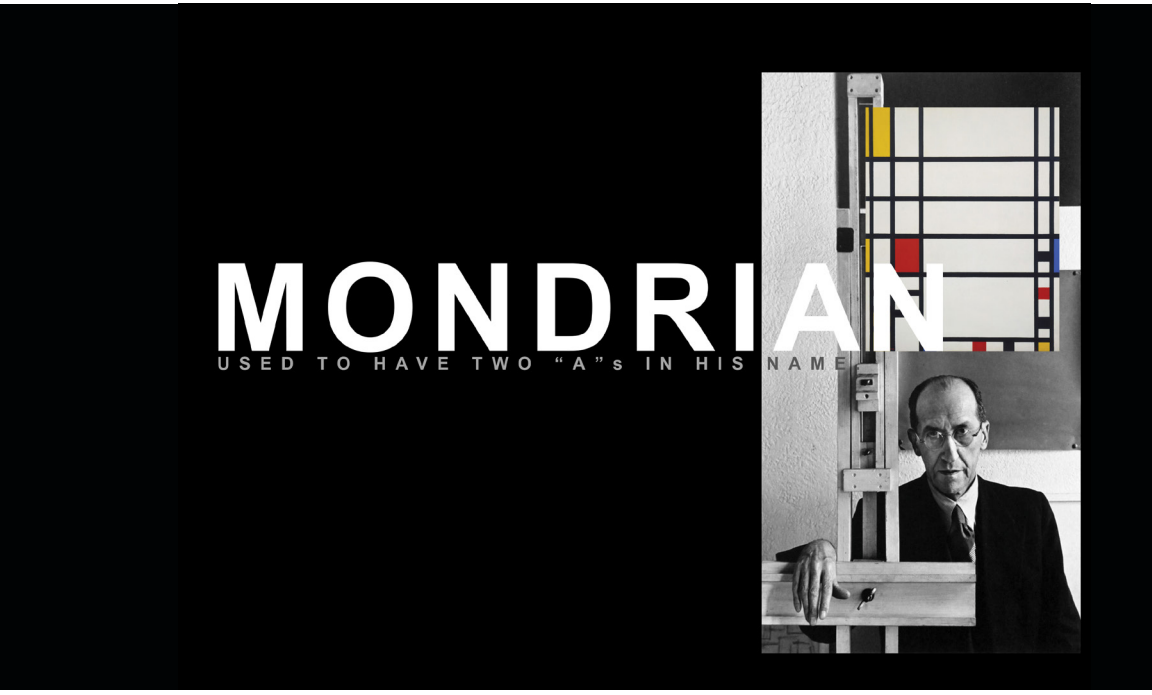
© The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Arnold Newman, "Piet Mondrian, New York," 1942. Photo via https://artblart.com

So, why *did* Mondrian drop the second "A" in his name?
Why did he apply to the material of his name—to the letters of his name—
the device of subtraction?


MONDRIAN
USED TO HAVE TWO "A"s IN HIS NAME

Then compression?
And change the *look* of his name?

Because he saw that *looks mean something*: he saw that the letters of his name add up not only to an Aesthetic Expression—
they also add up to a Symbolic Expression.


MONDRIAN
USED TO HAVE TWO "A"s IN HIS NAME

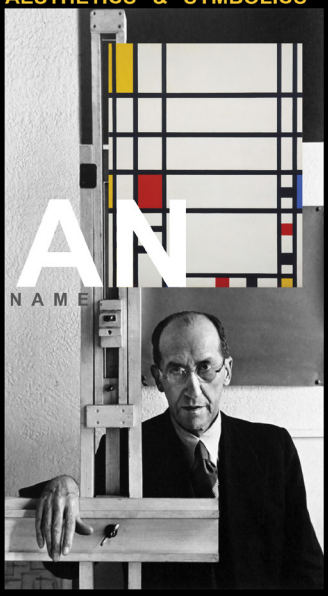
A fusion of Aesthetics & Symbolics.
Like his art.

Mondrian saw that his name, like his art, was a double-system:

AESTHETICS & SYMBOLICS

MONDRIAN

USED TO HAVE TWO "A"s IN HIS NAME



ART

what I call an Abstract Aesthetic System & Symbolic Image System.

And Mondrian took charge of the visible expression of his name the same way he took charge of his art. And he *formed* everything he saw—to align with his aesthetic and symbolic ideals.

And here's the thing: Where did those ideals come from?

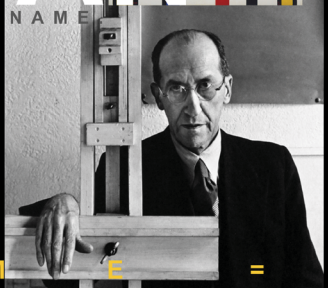
Not only from the outside (trees)—but also from the inside:
his Theosophy—his theological philosophy.

From his take on the underlying architecture of the world.

AESTHETICS & SYMBOLICS

MONDRIAN

USED TO HAVE TWO "A"s IN HIS NAME

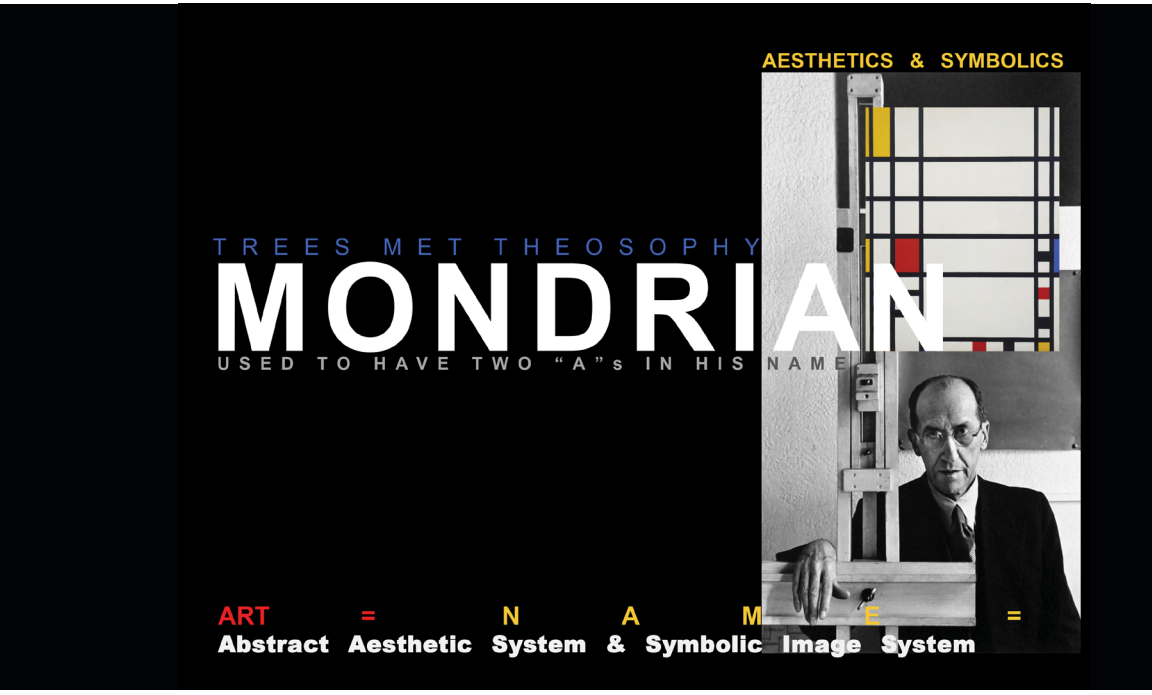


ART = N A M E =

Abstract Aesthetic System & Symbolic Image System

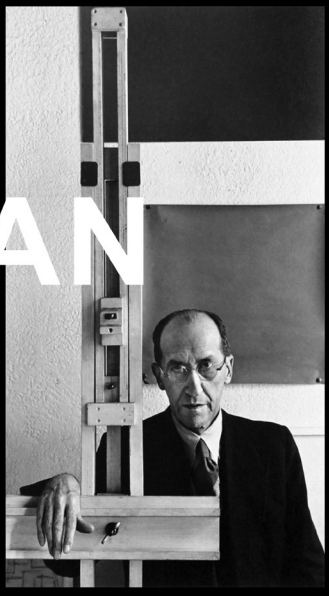
41

Trees met Theosophy.


AESTHETICS & SYMBOLICS
TREES MET THEOSOPHY
MONDRIAN
USED TO HAVE TWO "A"s IN HIS NAME
ART = N A M E =
Abstract Aesthetic System & Symbolic Image System

So he dropped that extra “A.”
Because through Mondrian’s eyes,
the underlying architecture of the world doesn’t include excess.
Only essentials.

MONDRIAN



43

Mondrian wanted his outer world to reflect his inner vision.

MONDRIAN

wanted his outer world to reflect his inner vision.

He wanted the *visible framework of art*

MONDRIAN

wanted his outer world to reflect his inner vision.

to reflect the *invisible framework of reality*.

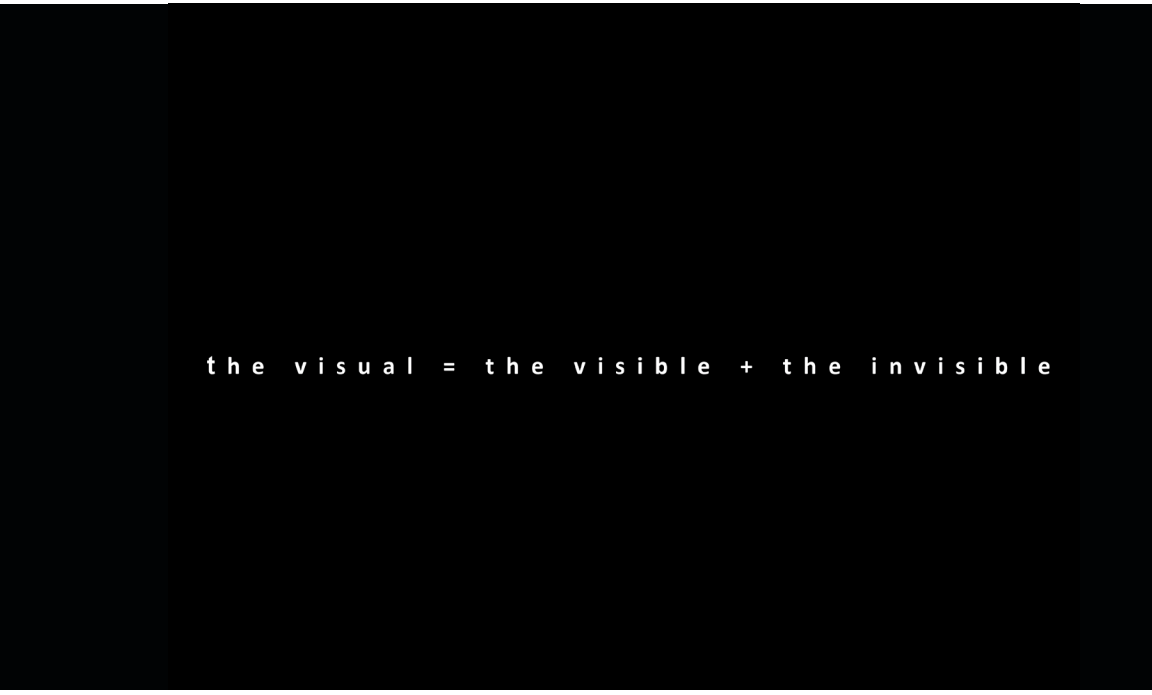
MONDRIAN

wanted his outer world to reflect his inner vision.

As I see it, Mondrian saw that art presents more than meets the eye.

Art presents more than meets the eye.

the visual = the visible + the invisible


the visual = the visible + the invisible

48

What we don’t see is just as important as what we do see.

And that extra “A,”

MONDRIAAN

which he could have turned into something else?
That extra “A”—

MONDRIAN

that missing “A”? That’s a Manifesto.

MONDRIA N

A Formalist Manifesto.

Mondrian's way of saying, *For me, Art is a double-edged sword, and I'm seizing that sword.*
The sword that we can't see . . . of a knight we can't see . . . because in reality, we only see the knight's horse.

Sure, Formalist Mondrian reminds us, composition is a game, and a game has rules, but doesn't another reality exist outside of composition?

Yes. As surely as a Knight has symbolic reality outside of the rules of chess, which only cares about the way the Knight moves.

Formalist Manifesto

MONDRIA N

53

Yes. The Knight Moves.

But also . . .

Formalist Manifesto

MONDRIA N

THE KNIGHT MOVES

54

The Knight Means.

Formalist Manifesto

MONDRIAAN

THE KNIGHT MOVES
THE KNIGHT MEANS

Move & Meaning: my chess-inspired take on Form & Content.

And this Russian-Formalist based view of the double-reality of art plays a central role in my work . . .
and lays the foundation for a new way of seeing a familiar term—
a *defamiliar* way, a *strange* way (terms Shklovsky used) of seeing a familiar term:

Formalist Manifesto

MONDRIAAN

MOVE & MEANING
THE KNIGHT MOVES
THE KNIGHT MEANS

VISUAL EF9ECTS.
VISUAL EFFECTS with a substitute “9” taking the place of the redundant, second “F.”

VISUALEF9ECTS

57

VISUAL EF9ECTS carved by the artist-knight . . . with . . .

THE
VISUALEFFECTS
WORD

58
[OPENING (ACT 1): END]

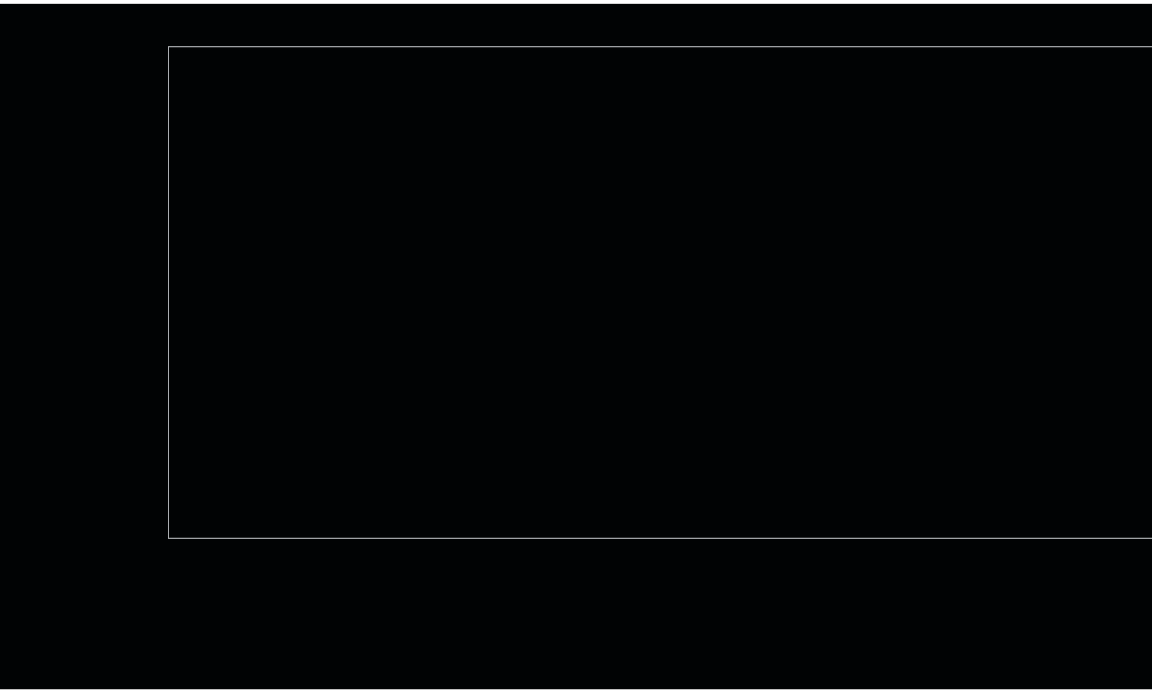
THE F-SWORD.

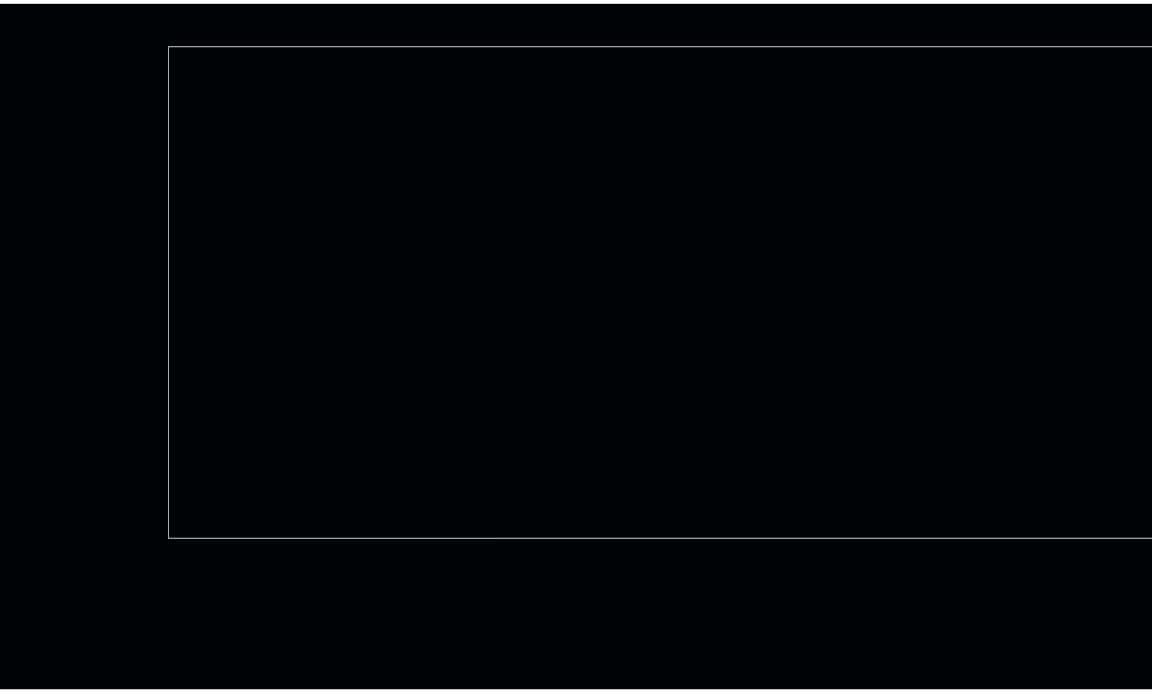
THE
VISUALEFECTS
SWORD

59

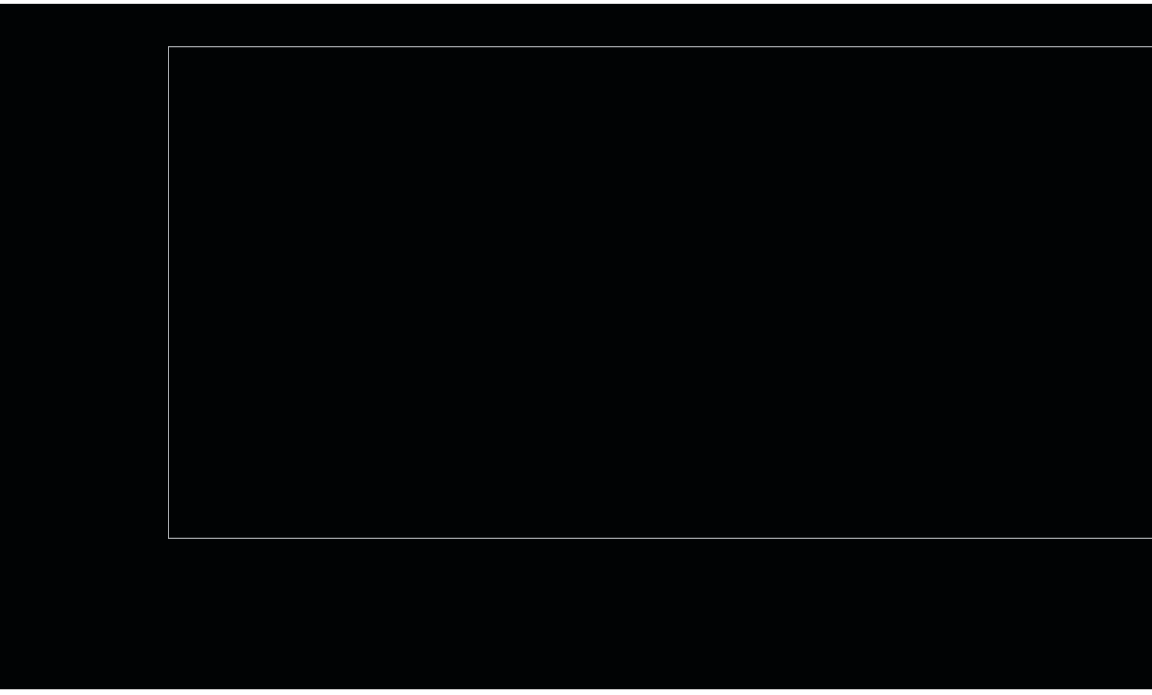
[MIDDLE GAME (ACT 2): START]

MIDDLE GAME





VISUALEFFECTS



VISUALEF9ECTS

63
[SCENE 1: START]

I landed on VISUAL EF9ECTS, with that strange “9,” as the title for a new book.

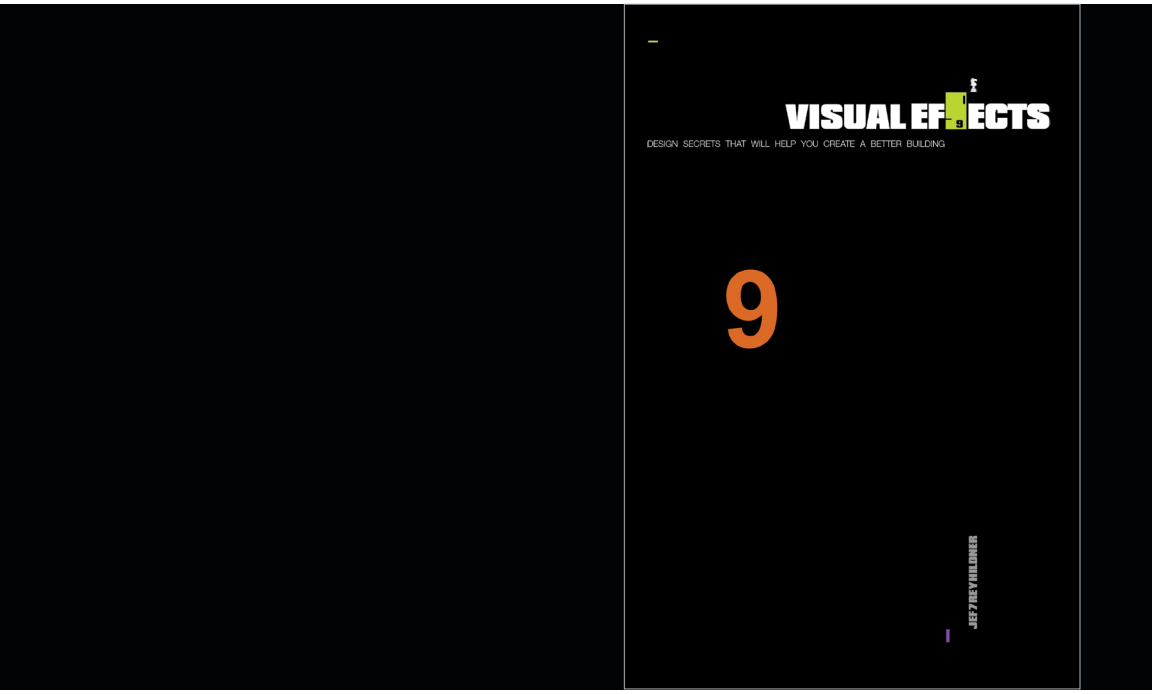
VISUALEF9ECTS

Working subtitle, *Design secrets that will help you create a better building*.

(The subtitle when I gave this talk in Florence. But an intense creative process led me to nix that and go with the published subtitle: *Architecture and the Chess Game of Form and Story*.)

And on the back cover, sub-subtitle, *Toward a Significant Architecture*.

(Which I nixed, deciding to save it to use as a title of a future book that I would publish in 2023 to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the publication of Le Corbusier's *Toward a New Architecture*.)



Early cover study. But from the start, the cover featured space. Space more empty than full.

I texted my daughter the cover, and she texted back, “Dad, I love the invisible rectangles!” Which I thought was very perceptive.

And, yes, I’ve organized a system of invisible rectangles of space and visible rectangles of letters, lines, and colors that play starring roles in a show for the eyes. And the book title and subtitle play co-starring roles in a show for the mind.

Put them together, and you get the music of Aesthetics & Symbolics.

I hope.

I searched for just the right title . . . and its Move & Meaning look.

I first made the “F” a painted cut-figure rectangle. For the cover only. The only color in a black and white book. A rectangle both aesthetic and symbolic, you can read it as a site plan or a wall.

Chessboard.
Canvas
Building.
Book.

The Lawn at UVA.

You get the picture.

66

Then I made that “F” a Knight.

9
AL EF ECTS
9
JEF7REY HILDNER
JEF7REY HILDNER

9

the one thing you need to know when you design a building

Getting closer to the final two-word title, waging an intellectual and artistic tug-of-war between Special Ef9ects and Visual Ef9ects.

And treating the book as a screenplay, signaled by the “written by” and courier font.

A Move & Meaning expression I nixed. Don’t ask my why. I still like it. And also the “F” as a Knight.

I used the superscript of the “9” to footnote the subtitle (above), which I displaced, yes, via the Knight’s “L” Move, to the back cover.

BEYOND

SPECIAL EF ECTS

WRITTEN BY JEF7REY HILDNER

I'm not sure that where I ended up improves on these early studies. I like my choice of the book title and subtitle. But I have mixed feelings about the Move & Meaning expression of my Mondriaan's extra "A": that extra "F."

I've always known that the "F" would get subbed for a "9," that the official, copyrighted title would be *Visual Ef9ects*. Because you can type it.

But whether my final treatment of that "F"/"9" on the cover, its display expression, is the best choice, well, I don't know. Fortunately, because I see that "F"/"9" as a variable, I can render it in all kinds of ways. I can keep the paint wet. And the nucleus of meaning won't change.

A concept, Visual Ef9ects, and a weird “F” that evoke “9”s and Knights and Chess and Rectangles . . . site plans, walls, buildings paintings, and books . . . Mondriaan . . . and movies . . .

art

. . . letters as a system of moves and meanings, contingent cut-figures, space-occupiers and space-definers . . . aesthetic & symbolic.

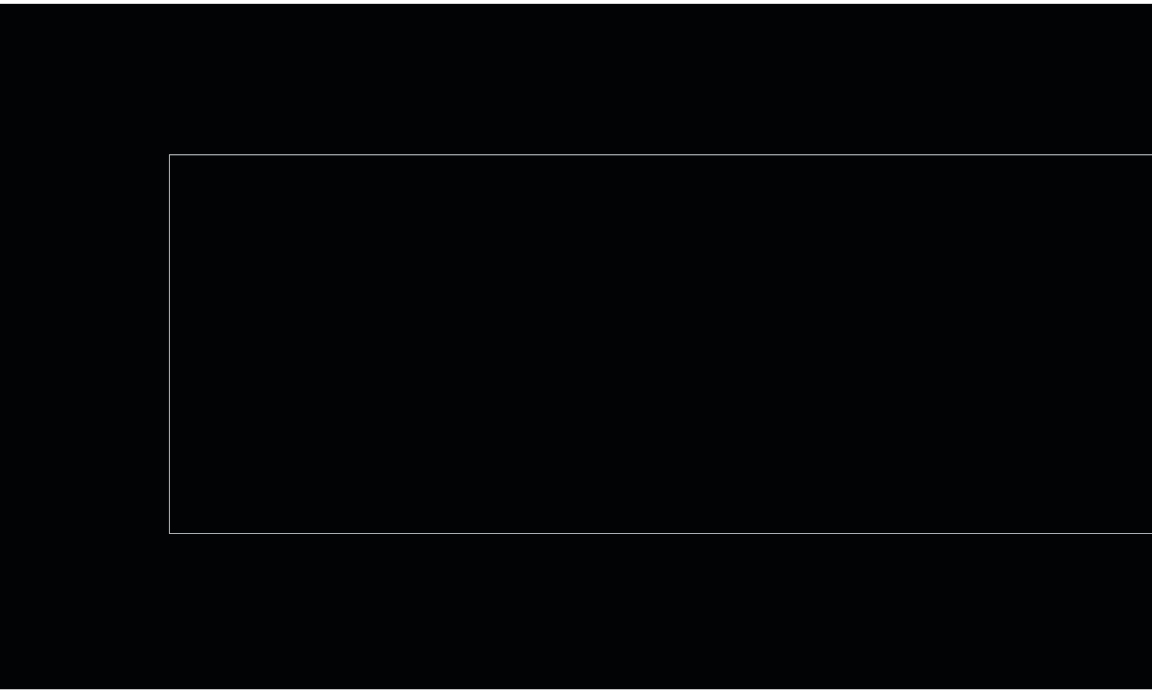
By making the “F” Russian Formalist *strange*, I heighten perception that this string of 13 letters (6 + 7) represents both an Abstract Aesthetic System and a Symbolic Image System. No matter which way I treat the “F”—the 9th letter.

In effect, VISUAL EF9ECTS = my logo. An expression, simple and complex at the same time, of my practical theory of art.

V

ARCHITECTURE AND THE CHESS

KHQ
SUAL EF9ECTS
GAME OF FORM & STORY



And so in my work, inspired by what I've learned from my study of Russian Formalism, I play what I call The Visual Chess Game of Form & Story.

AKA The Visual Chess Game of Move & Meaning.
AKA The Chess Game of Art.

AKA The Chess Game of VISUAL EF9ECTS.

Public Domain. Life-size chess on Palace Square, St. Petersburg, 1924. Photo via www.sntpeters.com

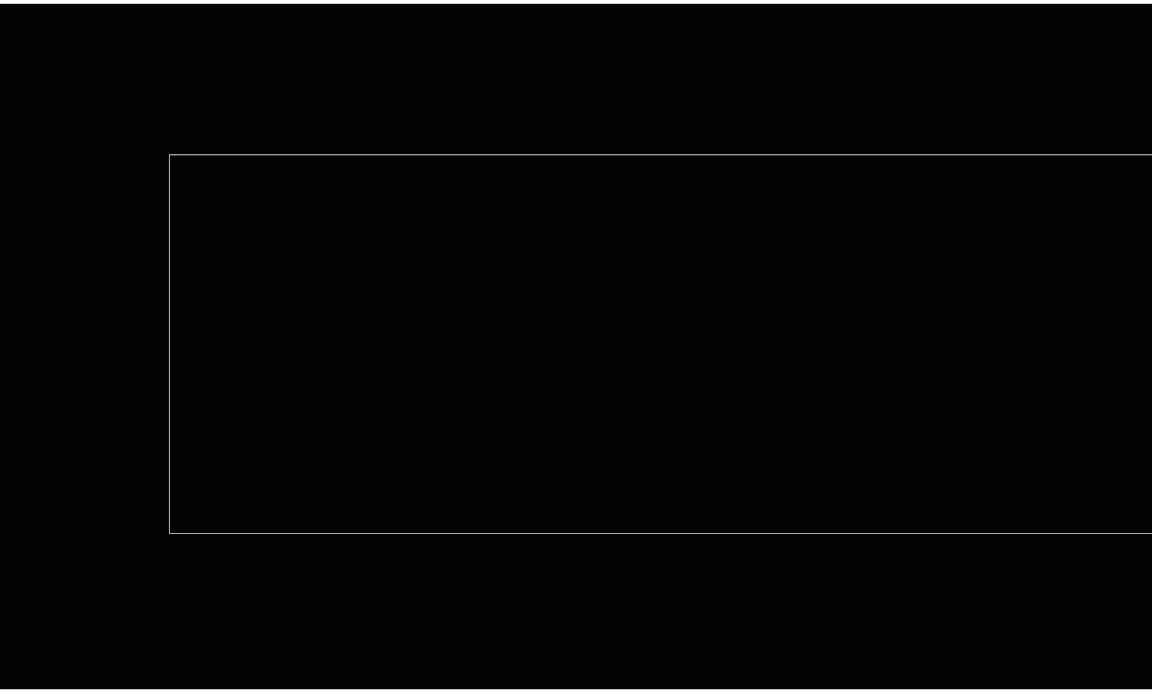
We can grasp what I mean by The Chess Game of Art more easily thanks to this terrific photograph of the world famous life-size chess game in 1924 on St. Petersburg's Palace Square.

Aesthetic Moves themselves do have Meaning.

But at the same time, another dimension of Meaning—for example, a book title—threads through the labyrinth of any visual construction.

Chess pieces called kings, queens, pawns, bishops, castles, and knights . . . trigger associations with medieval warfare and legend.

These Symbolic Associations won't t help you win.
But still, we feel the tangible presence of the game's underlying Meaning.



Chess illustrates the battle between the two armies of Move & Meaning.

I.E., Aesthetics & Symbolics.
I.E., Composition & Metaphor.

And as the Russian Formalists found out, the metaphor of chess can save you, but it can also sink you.

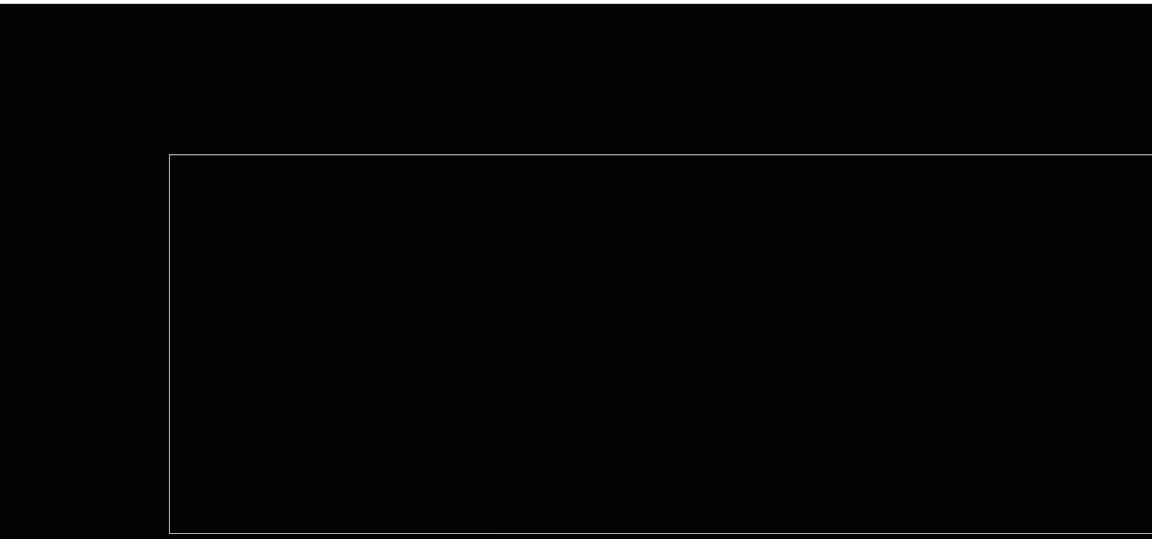
VISUAL EF9ECTS

DESIGN SECRETS THAT WILL HELP YOU CREATE A BETTER BUILDING

9

THE VISUAL CHESS GAME OF
MOVE & MEANING | COMPOSITION & METAPHOR
THE KNIGHT MOVES
THE KNIGHT MEANS

JEFFREY HILDNER



© Unknown. “Self checkmate: post-mortem chilling in quicksand,” 2016. Photo via i.imgur.com

In mental quicksand.

Because Shklovsky and other Russian Formalist Form Freaks, modern novelists and poets, aimed to reinvent the verbal arts on the basis of total abstraction.

But the more they studied the chess board, the less they could come up with a “yes” to this question:

Can you really design—through a point-counterpoint arrangement of abstract elements in an artistic arena—a winning composition that rules out metaphor?

And the follow-up question:

And even if it is possible, form is surely the necessary basis for art, but is it a sufficient basis?

The first question proved tough enough.

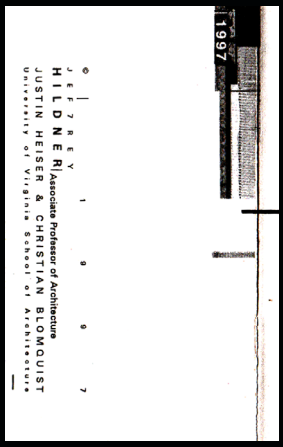
Think about it.

On the one hand, Shklovsky said, “Art is technique.” / “Art is device.” (Two different translations from Russian into English.)

Art is a system of artistic techniques/devices applied to materials—

• physical materials: like concrete, to which we can apply techniques like texture, paint, polish, score, puncture, tilt, torque, cantilever, reinforce . . .
• compositional materials: like a site plan, to which you can apply devices like asymmetry, alignment, grid, scale, hierarchy, rotation, repetition, phenomenal transparency . . .

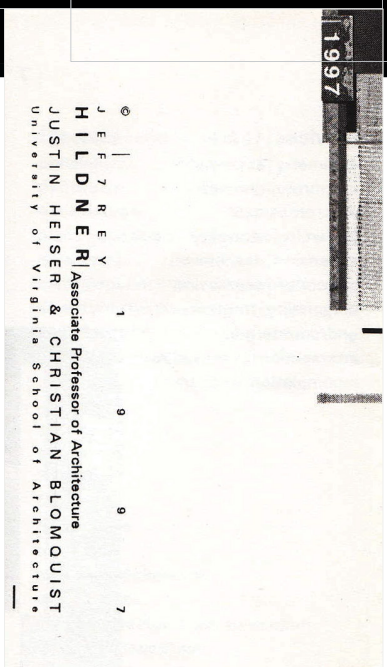
Art is technique. | Art is device.



ASIDE. In 1997, when I taught at UVA, I was so struck by this concept of art as device—a concept deeply rooted in the theory and history of art but a concept that I didn't encounter during the five years I studied architecture at Princeton (I had to find the concept on my own many years later)—that I made with the help of my students Justin Heiser and Christian Blomquist a wallet-size Device Card: a handy teaching device with a jump-start list of over 135 devices that architecture students and architects can apply to the design of a building.

This 2-by-3-inch card actually unfolds into a double-sided 14-by-3-inch accordion strip, seven panels wide.

Art is technique. | Art is device.



Actual size

1997
RELATIONSHIPS
1. move | meaning
2. abstraction | representation
3. 3-d | 2-d (volume | plane)
4. figure | field
5. center | edge
6. line | plane
7. autonomy | contingency
8. open | closed
9. inside | outside
10. up | down: front | back: left | right
11. dark | light
12. static | dynamic (stability | turbulence)
13. horizontal | vertical
14. additive | subtractive
15. solid | void (positive | negative)
16. centripetal | centrifugal
17. landscape | building (nature | culture)
18. object | texture/fabric
19. occupy | control/mark
20. move | countermove
21. shallow space | deep space
22. modern | hypermodern
23. transparency — literal | phenomenal
TRAN
extension of Rowe | Slutzky
Literal (Optical/Material)
1. atmospheric
2. transparent
3. translucent
4. opaque
© | 1 9 9 9 7
JEFFREY
HILDNER | Associate Professor of Architecture
JUSTIN HEISER & CHRISTIAN BLOMQUIST
University of Virginia School of Architecture

S P A
Phenomenal X|Y|Z (Organizational)
formal|spatial clarity|ambiguity
continuation|break...recontinuation
alignment|disruption...realignment
lock/interlock...disengage
R E N C
Phenomenal M|M (Conceptual)
move|meaning ambiguity
(the form|content dialectic)
Victor Shklovsky, Art as Device (1917)
Y
device: something used to gain an artistic effect (Webster); device = move; formal|spatial moves (& countermoves) used in the chess game of architecture.....
I
devices

| 1

—

Devices | 1 – 21

abstraction
layering
alignment
datum
projection | recession
cutting out | adding on
interlacing/intertwining
fragmentation
elongation
excavation
elevation/antigravitation
rotatation
inversion
extension/*hyper*extension
contraction | expansion
tension | compression
*hyper*tension/*counter*tension
bending
stretching
wrapping
folding

| 2

—

Devices | 22 – 42

entrance | path | goal
threshold
sequence
procession/circulation
centering/recentering
off-centering/decentering
stop | go
redirection
linearity | planarity | plasticity
counterplanarity/coplanarity
countersystem/subsystem
opposition/juxtaposition
superimposition/transposition
interposition/contraposition
reduction
scaffolding
shifting
sliding
slipping
stepping
overlapping

| 3

—

Devices | 43 – 63

warp
crank/skew
counter-rhythm/syncopation
reflection/reiteration
placement/replacement
modulation
elision
continuation | discontinuation
connection/interconnection
stagger/offset
insertion | incision
partition
substitution
diminution | enlargement
S | M | L | XL (scale)
step-zoom/continuous-zoom
graft
truncate
score/scribe
facet
fracture

| 4

—

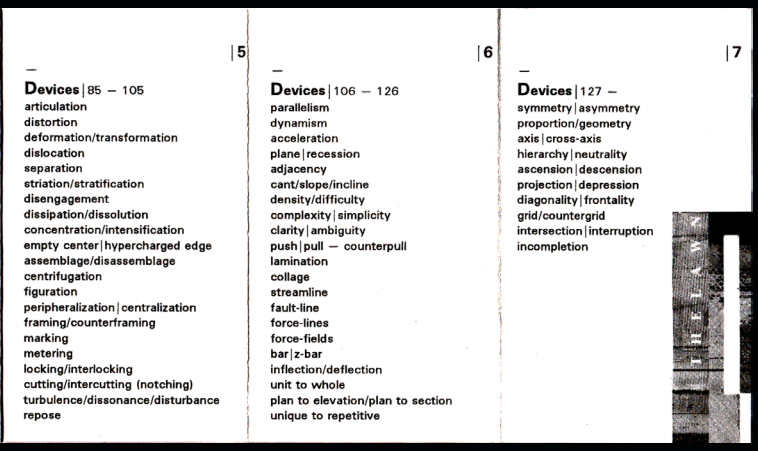
Devices | 64 – 84

diptych/triptych
split-screen
module
substitution
enclosure | exposure
conceal | reveal
torque
stutter/delay
exaggeration
rigor/precision
interpenetration
blurring
joining/co-joining
dividing/subdividing
tipping/tilting
turning
flattening
collapsing
shearing
abrasion/erosion
counterpoint/counterline

Add this up and what do you get?
If, on the one hand, art is a system of artistic techniques/devices—Moves—applied to materials?

First, you get a clear intellectual premise and practical system for language acquisition: the language of architecture. Equivalent to learning the language of chess, the moves an aspiring chess professional must master to win.

Second, and this brings us back to the history of Russian Formalism, you get the basis for the rally cry of metaphor-free Form: Form that acts as its own Content—and shuts the door to any content outside of the abstract system of the chess game.

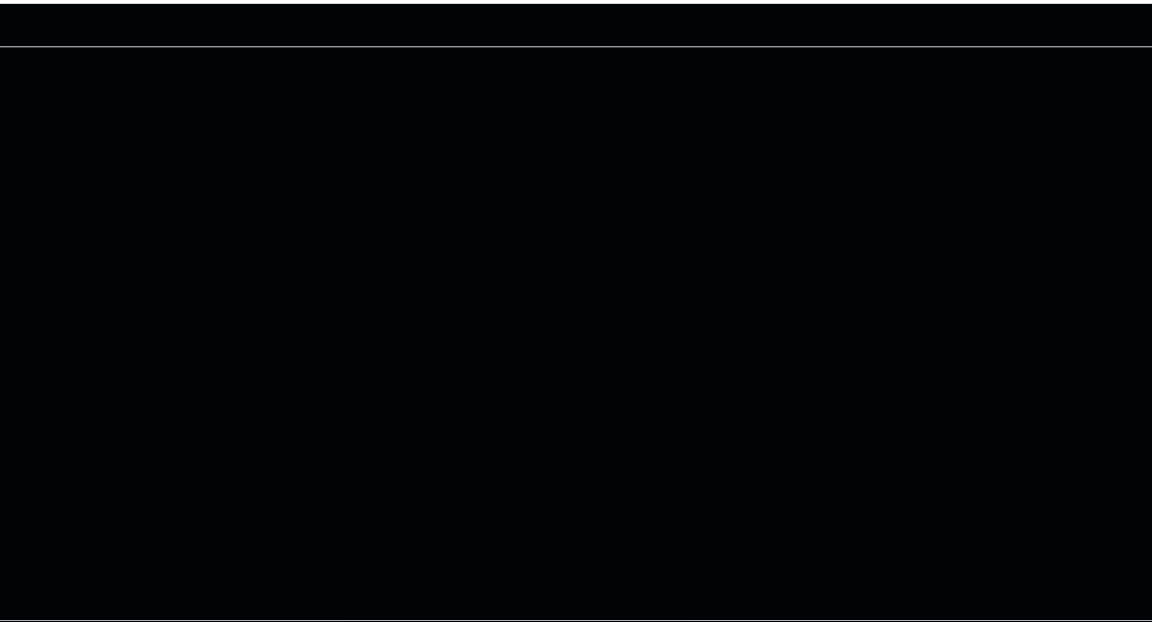


But on the other hand . . .

77
[SCENE 1: END]

that blasted Knight. That Symbolic Knight.

Art is technique. | Art is device.



© Getty Images.Antoni Gaudi, Casa Milà, 1910. Photo via www.gettyimages.com

78
[SCENE 2: START]

Let me quickly show you five examples of chess-vibe projects that fall at

Example 1. 1910. Antoni Gaudi's brave architecture-as-frozen-music fantasy Casa Milà in Barcelona.

Photo far right: CC BY SA 3.0. Antoni Gaudi, Casa Milà, 1910. Photo via https://en.wikipedia.org

Where, on the roof . . .

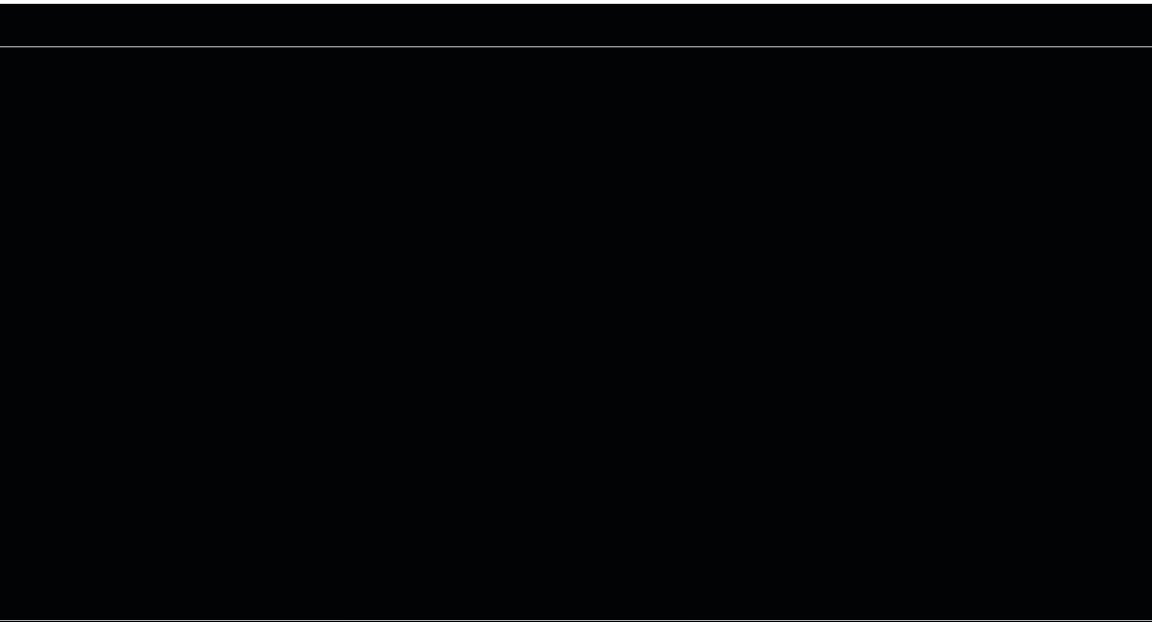


Photo on left: ⎚ Public Domain. Antoni Gaudi, Casa Milà, 1910. Photo via https://commons.wikimedia.org

life-size chess-piece sentinels in ceramic and stone . . .

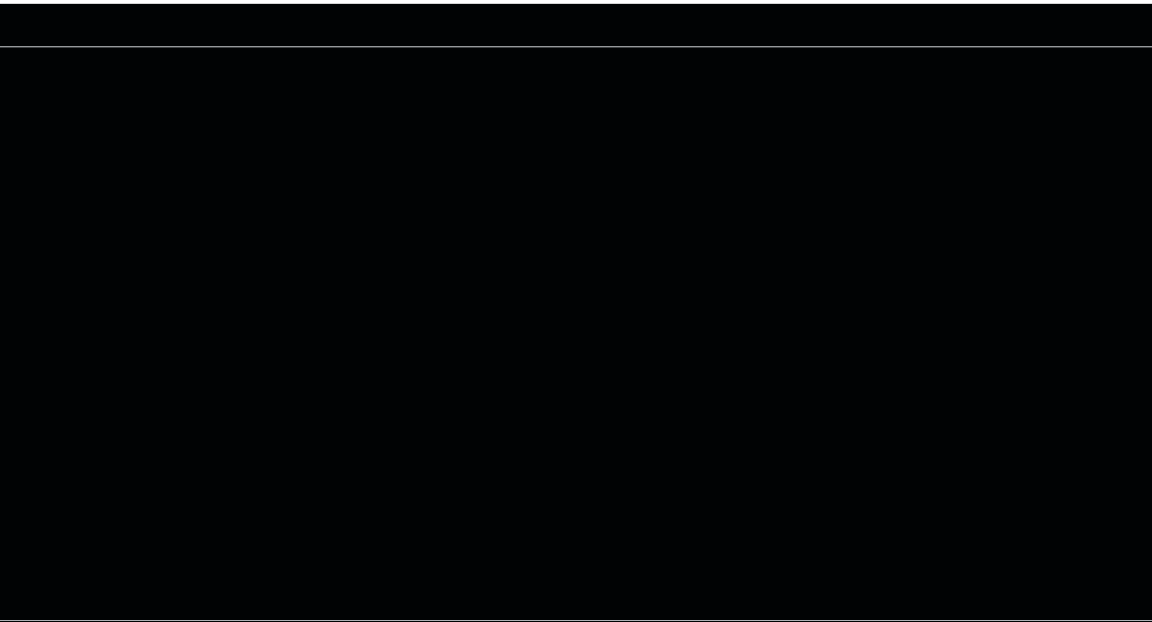


Photo on left: ⎚ Public Domain. Antoni Gaudi, Casa Milà, 1910. Photo via https://commons.wikimedia.org

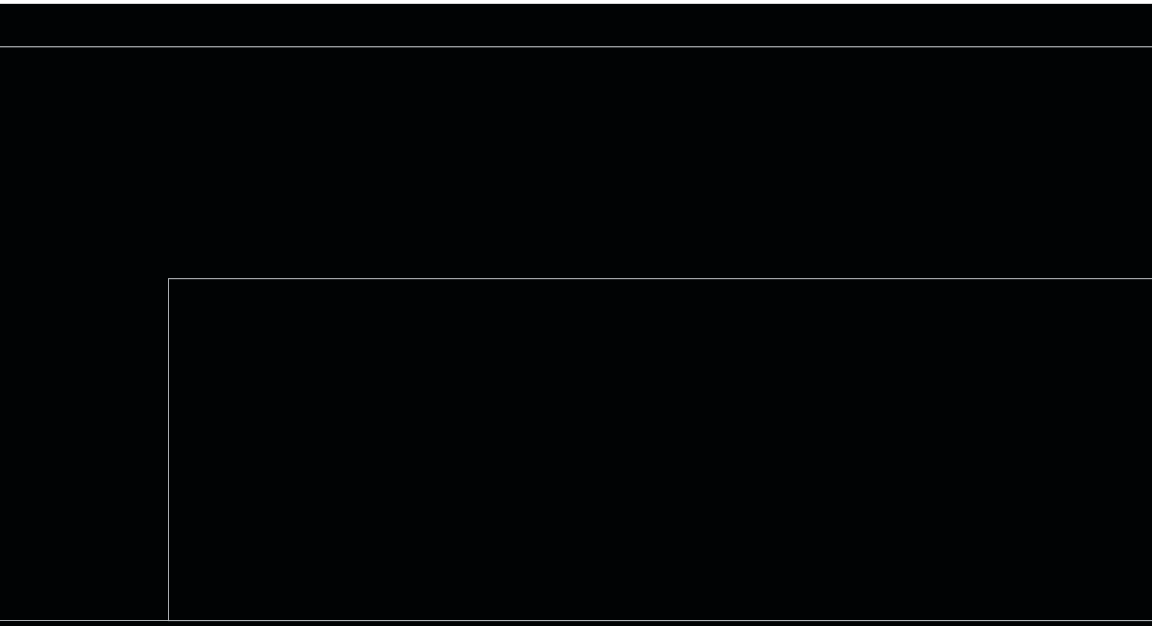
look to the Mediterranean Sea from their wavy watchtower atop a wavy quarry.

(As far the building's exuberant plastic expression, its maverick sculptural form, Gehry preview? Zaha preview?)

Photo on left: © Mike Flynn, "Paint Mines of Calhan," 2013. Photo via https://fineartamerica.com
Photo on right: ⓪ Public Domain. Antoni Gaudi, Casa Milà, 1910. Photo via https://commons.wikimedia.org

By the way, I learned a new word at Artist Point in Yellowstone: *hoodoo*—
"a column or pinnacle of weathered rock" . . "a natural column of rock in western North America often in fantastic form."
Googled me into a whole new world . . .
Like the hoodoo magic captured by photographer Mike Flynn at the Calhan Paint Mines in Colorado [opposite page, left].

Gaudi recreated nature on the rooftop of Casa Milà.
Nature Hoodoo.
Chess Set Hoodoo.
Gaudi Hoodoo.
Who knew.

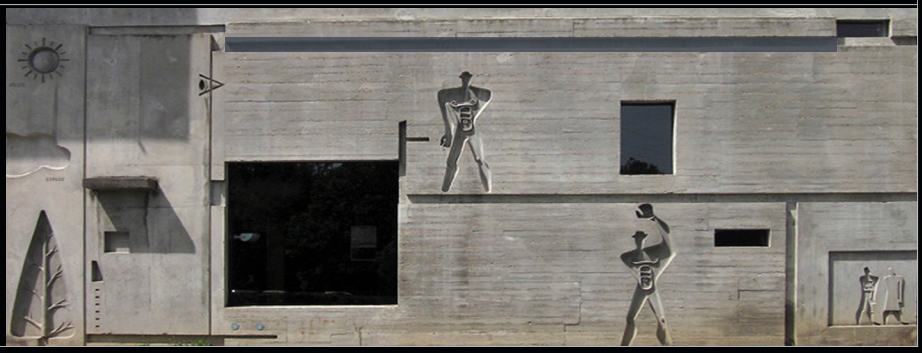


© Reinier de Jong. Le Corbusier, Unité d'Habitation, Firminy, France, 1952. Photo via www.reinierdejong.com

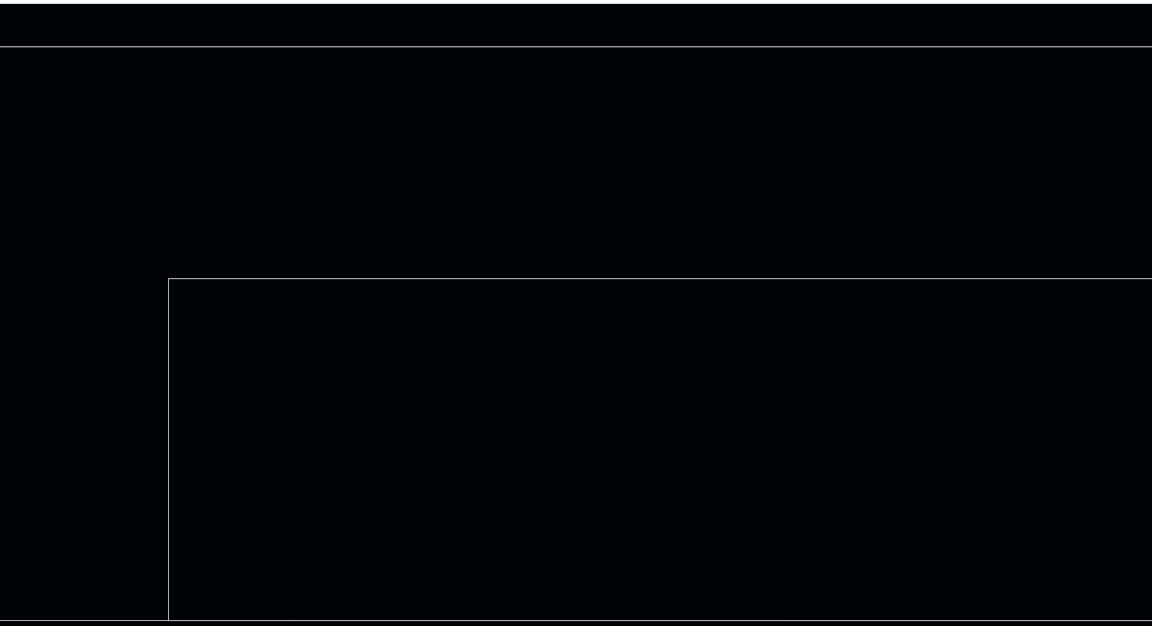
Example 2. 1952. Le Corbusier's Unité d'Habitation in Firminy, France. Corb's concrete canvas.

A cinematic rectangle that displays his chess game of Move & Meaning, Composition & Metaphor—
merging his abstract aesthetic system and symbolic image system into a unified plastic expression.

A wall not only about Form—and here lies the key, in sorting out the double-identity of Formalism—
but a wall that Le Corbusier *formed*.

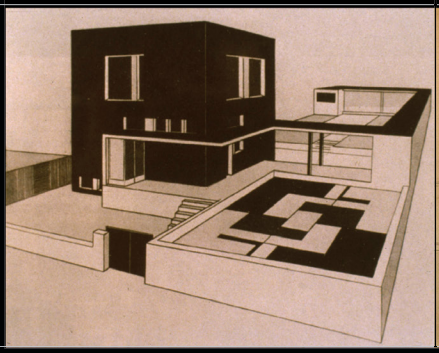


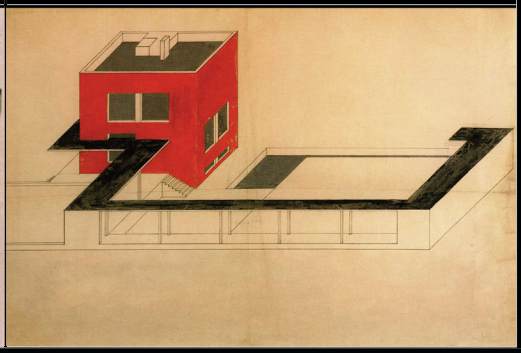
A checkerboard of Symbols and Soul that he reigned in under his form-making artistic Control.

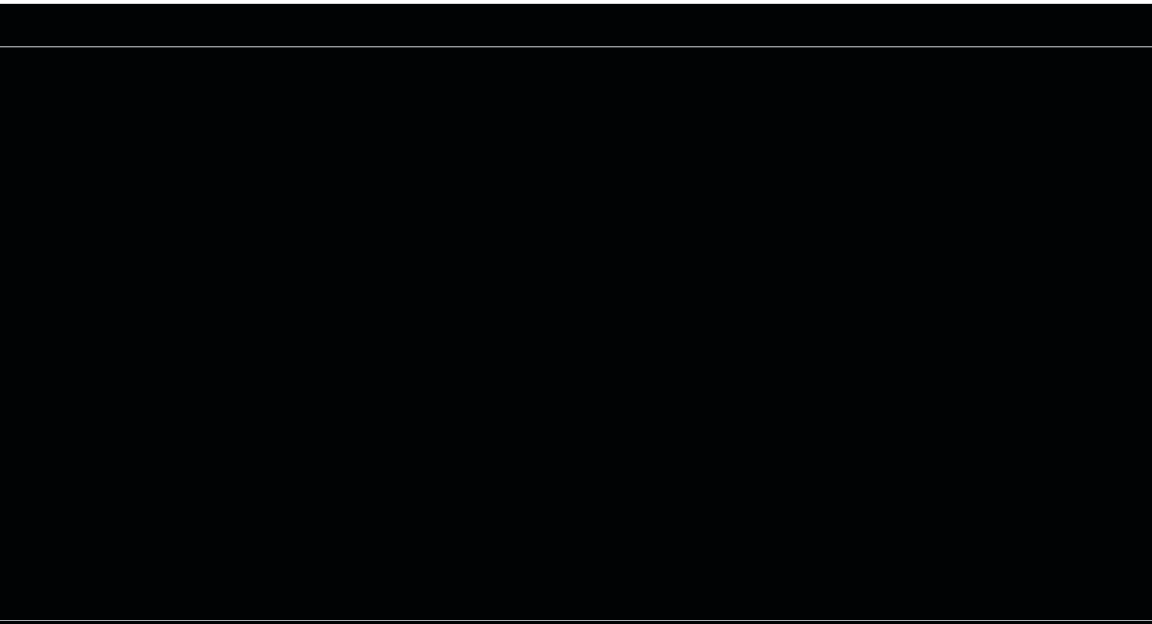


⎚ Public Domain. Farkas Molnar, The Red Cube, 1923. Photos via https://thecharnelhouse.org

Example 3. 1923. Farkas Mólnar's unbuilt The Red Cube—
integration of chess-piece object and chessboard landscape.





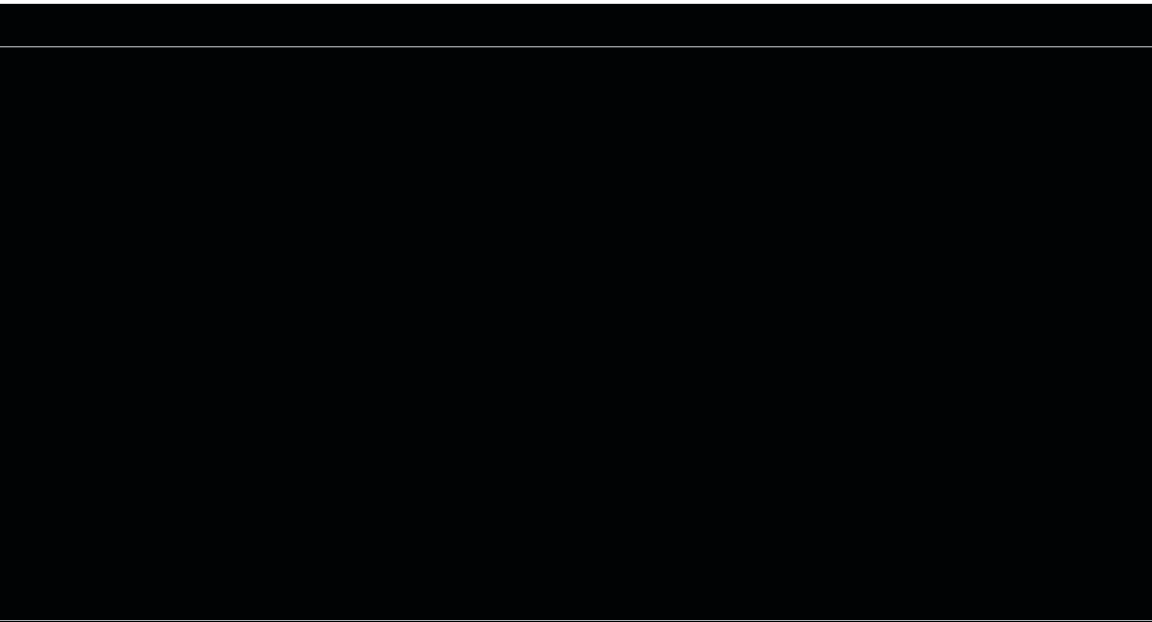


Ⓒ Public Domain, US. Matisse, *Painter's Family*, 1911. Photo via www.hermitagemuseum.org

Example 4. 1911. Matisse's *Painter's Family*.
Matisse's wife looks on as their sons play checkers on a checkerboard rug in a checkerboard room. (Same game board for checkers and chess.)

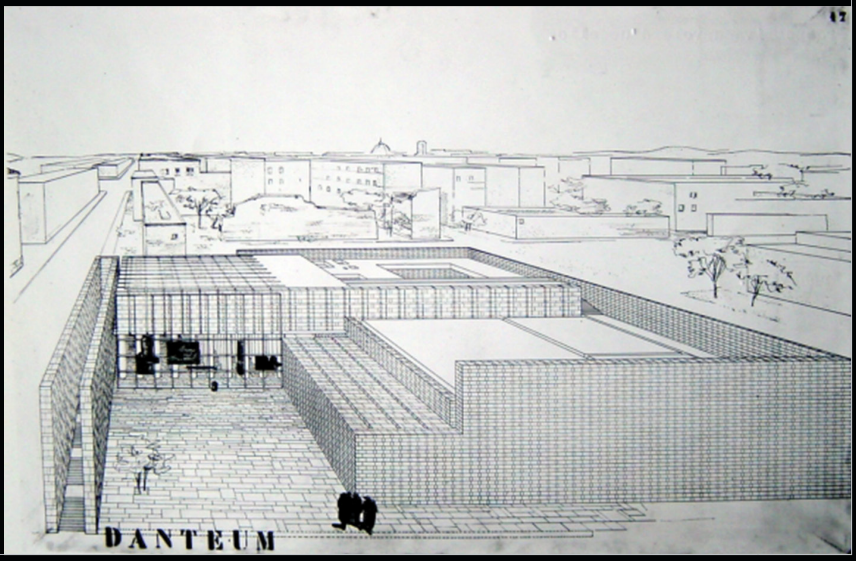
What does it mean that Matisse foregrounds his super-tall daughter?
Turning checkers into chess: Making her the black queen.
Because no piece in chess has more power than the queen.

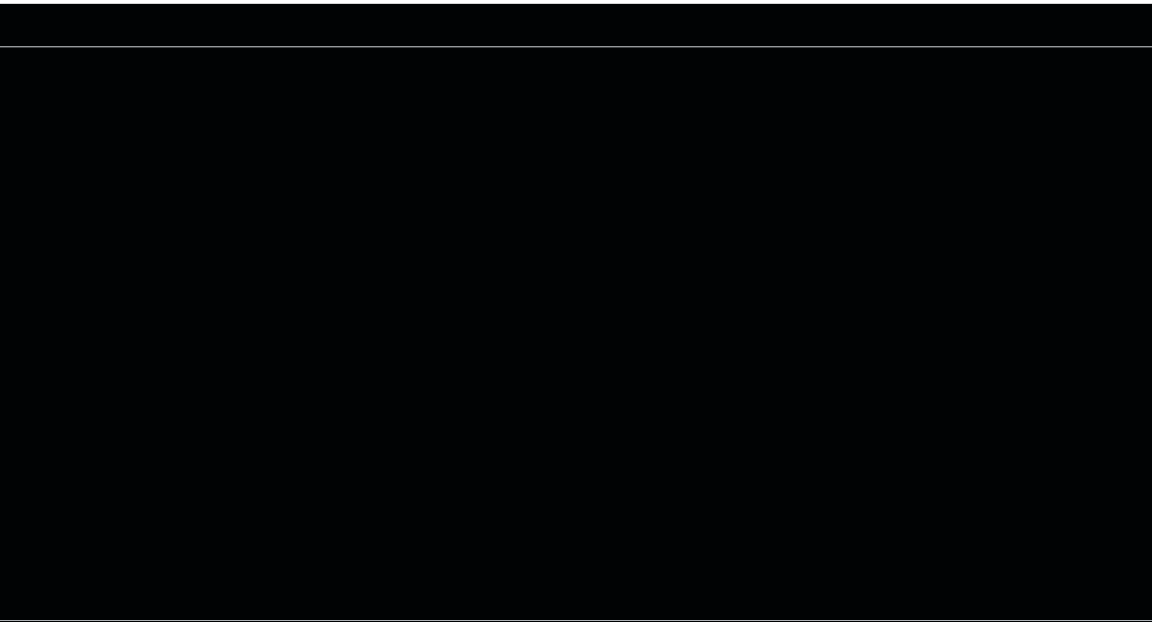
Through the blended metaphor of checkers and chess, Matisse projects a parable on the rectangular game board of a painting. He heightens our perception of the visible and invisible forces that shape the structure and soul of a family—and the structure and soul of the game of art.



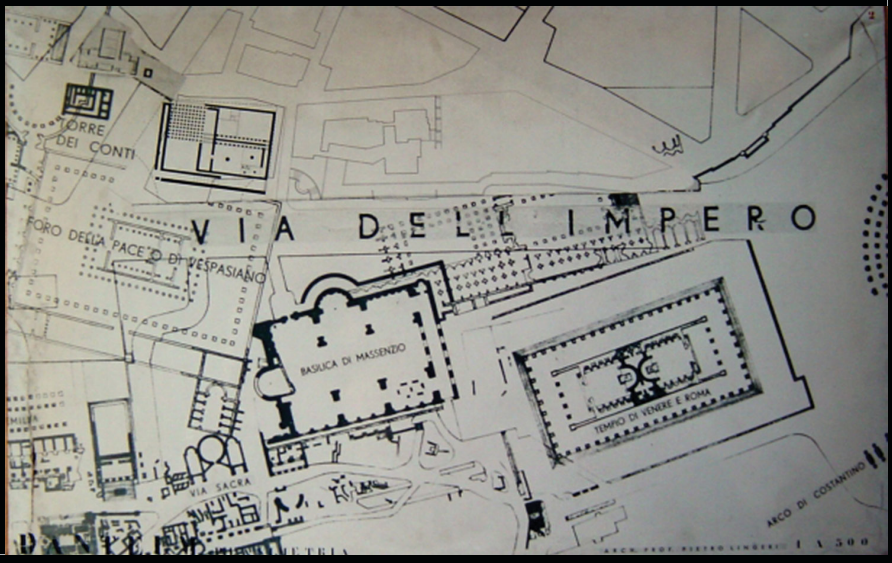
⊘ Public Domain. Giussepe Terragni, Danteum, 1938. Photo via www.lombardiabeniculturali.it

Example 5. 1938. Giuseppe Terragni's unbuilt Danteum.


DANTEUM



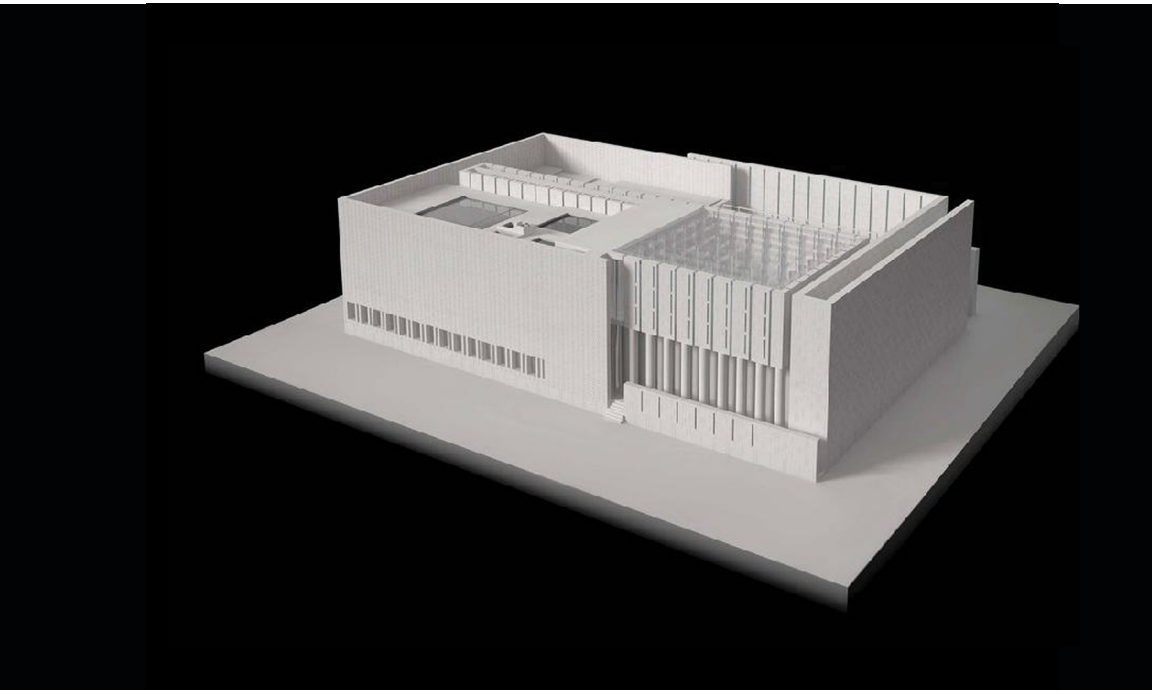
℗ Public Domain. Giussepe Terragni, Danteum, 1938. Photo via www.lombardiabeniculturali.it


TORRE
DEI CONTI
VIA DELL'IMPERO
FORO DELLA PACE O DI VESPASIANO
BASILICA DI MASSENZIO
TEMPIO DI VENERE E ROMA
VIA SACRA
ARCO DI COSTANTINO

© CE.S.A.R. Giussepe Terragni, Danteum, 1938. Photo via http://ilgiornaledellarte.com

88

Tarragni's rectangular chess box includes the board and all the pieces he needs to tell the story of *The Divine Comedy*, the epic poem completed in 1320 by Dante Alighieri.



© CE.S.A.R. Giussepe Terragni, Danteum, 1938. Photo via http://www.domusweb.it

89

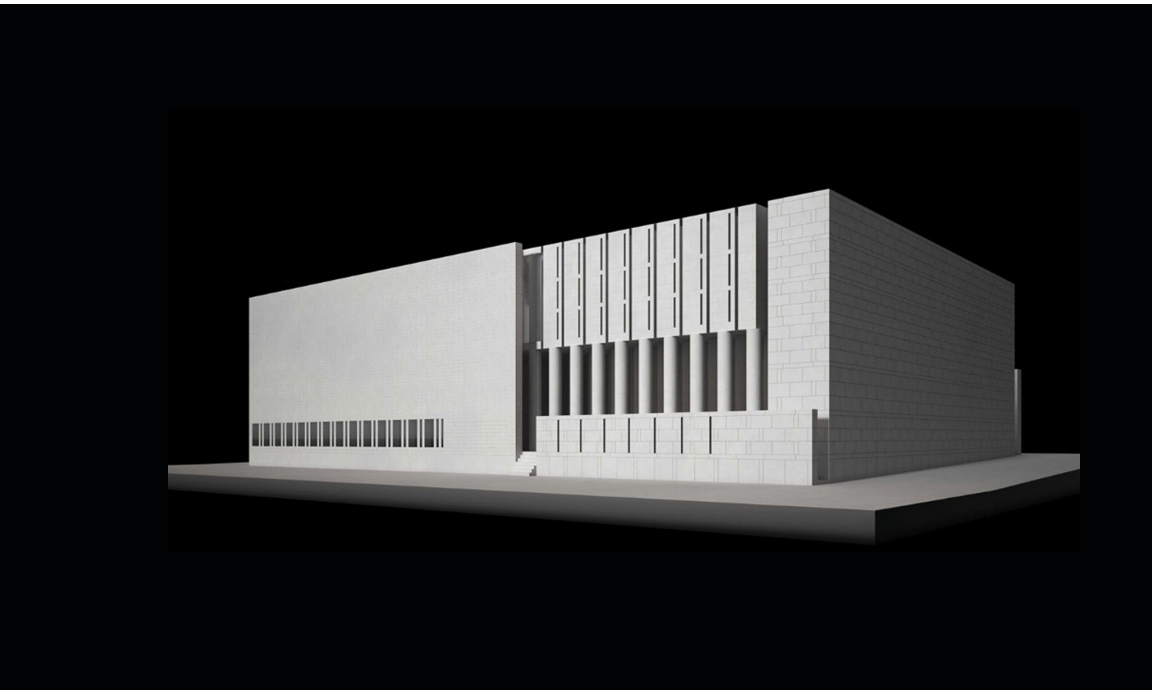
Though unbuilt, no building has shaped my frame my Form & Story consciousness and my aspirations as an architect more than Terragni's Danteum, and I thank Thomas Schumacher for that, because his books on the Danteum set me on my lifelong quest.

Through allegorical organization of space and allegorical expression of Form, Terragni makes a book a building.

Architecture is literature.

A building is a poem.

Here, an ode to Dante's vision of the Architecture of the Form & Story of Reality made manifest by Terragni metaphorically through Art.



© Simone Bruni. Giussepe Terragni, Danteum, 1938. Photo via www.simonebruni.org

90

[SCENE 2: END]

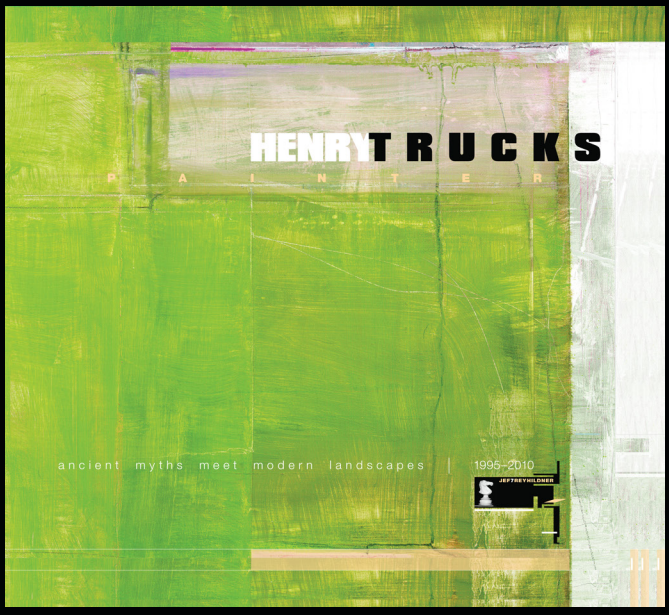
© kitchener.lord. Danteum 2 (digital reconstruction). Giussepe Terragni, Danteum, 1938. Photo via https://www.flickr.com

91
[SCENE 3: START]

I paint under the name Henry Trucks.

And given my focus on the connection between Formalism and Chess, both rooted in the interplay of Form & Story, now you know why I stamp the cover of my book—why I mark the architectural site plan that the cover of my book represents—with a knight.

The subtitle of the book, *ancient myths meet modern landscapes*, gives readers a clue that I explore through my paintings the Knight's double-role in the Chess Game of Art.

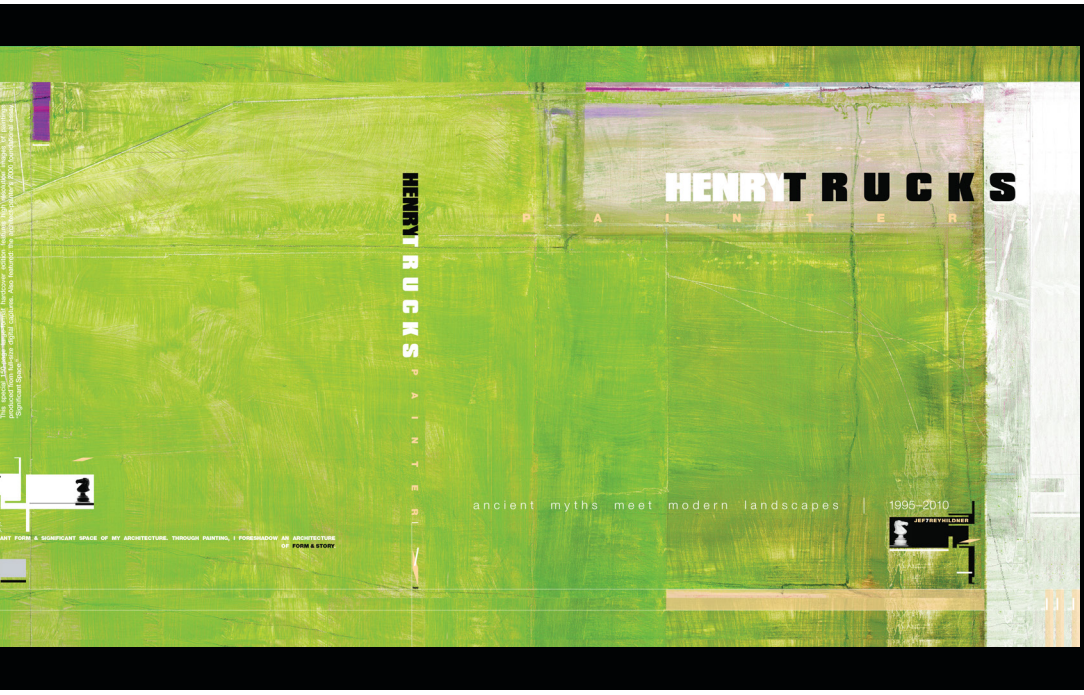

HENRY TRUCKS
P A I N T E R
ancient myths meet modern landscapes
1995–2010
JEFFREYHILDNER

Now, I also stamp the back cover of the book with a Knight.
The knight on the other side of the chess board: the Black Knight.
White Knight & Black Knight. The Knight Team.

Two sides of the same coin. Like heads and tails:
Where one goes, the other goes.
Where the White Knight roams, so does its shadow.

The White Knight = Form. Aesthetics. Composition. *Chess Moves*.
The Black Knight = Story. Symbolics. Metaphor. *Chess Meaning*.

This double-identity Knight crusades through my work.


HENRY TRUCKS PAINTER
ancient myths meet modern landscapes | 1995–2010
JEFFREYHILDNER
HENRY TRUCKS PAINTER
FORM & STORY

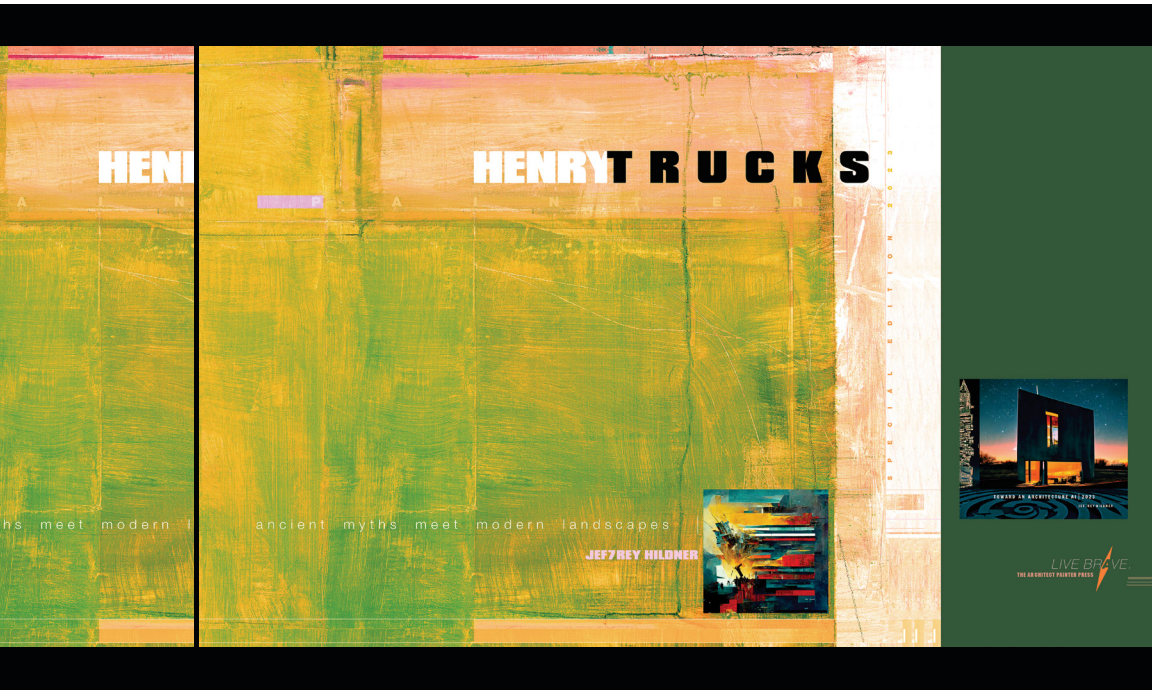
93

The latest version of the cover: dust jacket—back flap to front flap.

I withheld the Knight from the front cover, revealing its presence only on the back cover. Abstractly, in the form of a large fragment of one of my paintings that I title *The Knight*—aka *Daedalus: Self-Portrait*.

And also literally, in the form of an actual chess piece, viewed in the foreground of a chessboard: a Silver Knight.

More about the Silver Knight later.


HENRY TRUCKS
ancient myths meet modern landscapes
JEFFREY HILDNER
SPECIAL EDITION 2023
LIVE BRAVE.

^ Blurb—originally on the back cover but moved to the interior, page 8:

SELF-TAUGHT PAINTER JEF7REY HILDNER AKA HENRY TRUCKS draws on his inspiration as an architect to explore the theme of the rectangle, simultaneously aesthetic and symbolic. He invites viewers to explore the open-ended meaning of his semi-abstract pictures by seeing them as both maps and windows: panoramic landscapes you could either snapshot from an airplane or view from your porch looking toward the horizon. His paintings depict site plans and facades—open spaces and walls.

The Architect Painter presents not only a highly developed aesthetic language, which he applies to his buildings. Through his modern, asymmetric layering of lines and planes, positive figures and negative spaces—

through devices of color, texture, and collage—he evokes the spirit of ancient myths, a symbolic dimension that also infuses his architecture.

Blending the full range of his nine signature concepts outlined in his book *Daedalus 9*, signature concepts—including Control and Soul, Jigsaw Design, Negative Cubism, and Empty Space | Full Space, the artist explores what he calls the "Visual Chess Game of Move & Meaning"—the basis for an architecture of Form & Story that he has so far most fully realized in his award-winning project, Dante | Telescope House.

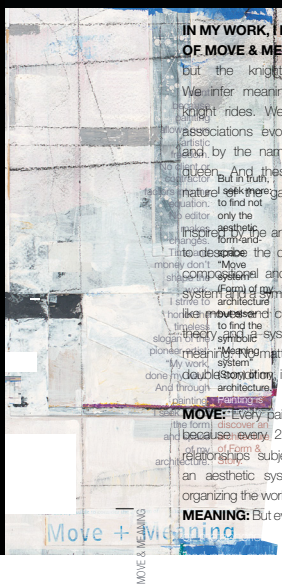
This special large-format hardcover edition features high resolution images of paintings produced from full-size digital captures. Also featured: The Architect Painter's 2000 foundational essays "Significant Space" and "Move & Meaning," photographs of his architectural projects, and AI-generated images that underscore a distinctive source of inspiration: the myth of Daedalus—the legendary Greek architect who invented the Labyrinth and Wings.

MOVE & MEANING

But on another level, my paintings represent more than meets the eye.
Not simply abstract spacecraft compositions, these paintings represent my attempts to create through the chess game of Move & Meaning the other side of the coin of Significant Space:
space that also resonates with metaphorical and emotional meaning.
My paintings reflect my quest to find the *Significant Form & Significant Space* of my architecture.

This double-identity Knight—White Knight of Form (Aesthetic Moves) & Black Knight of Story (Symbolic Meaning)—crusades through my work.

The deeper aesthetic dimension of art lies not in absence of meaning but in multiplicity and density of meanings.

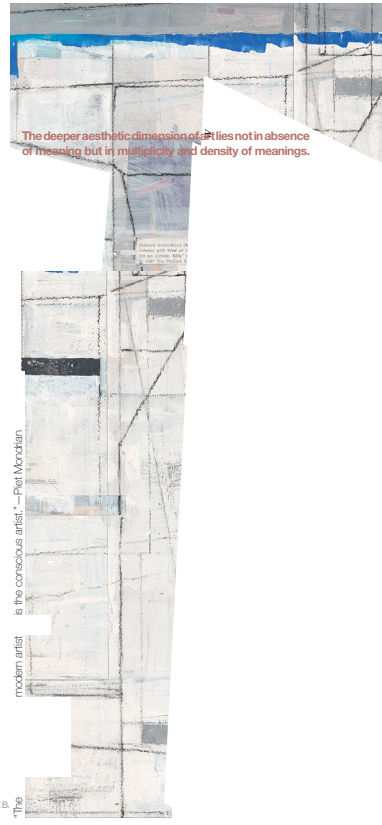


IN MY WORK, I PLAY WHAT I TERM THE "VISUAL CHESS GAME OF MOVE & MEANING." A knight in chess moves as part of a game, but the knight also resonates with metaphorical meaning. We infer meaning from its form: a horse, on which the gallant knight rides. We infer meaning from the military and royal court associations evoked by the name of the chess piece—knight—and by the names of other chess pieces: bishop, rook (chariot), queen. And these associations get underscored by the symbolic game: a battle of two armies defending their king.

Inspired by the analogy of chess, I coined the term "Move & Meaning" to describe the double condition of every visual work: simultaneously compositional and metaphorical. Simultaneously an abstract aesthetic system and a symbolic image system. Simultaneously a system of chess-like moves and countermoves deployed in accord with abstract game theory and a system of chess-like symbols that triggers associational meaning. No matter how oblivious a painter or architect may be to this double condition, it can't be avoided. It defines every painting and building.

MOVE: Every painting is simultaneously a plan, section, and elevation, because every 2D picture is an abstract system of form-and-space relationships subject to multiple readings. Every 2D picture presents an aesthetic system: a compositional system—an architecture—for organizing the world.

MEANING: But every painting (and building) also conveys representational

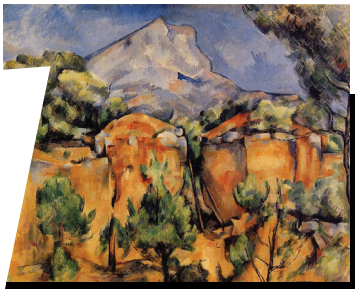
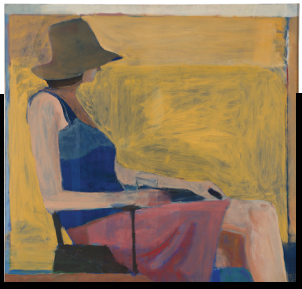


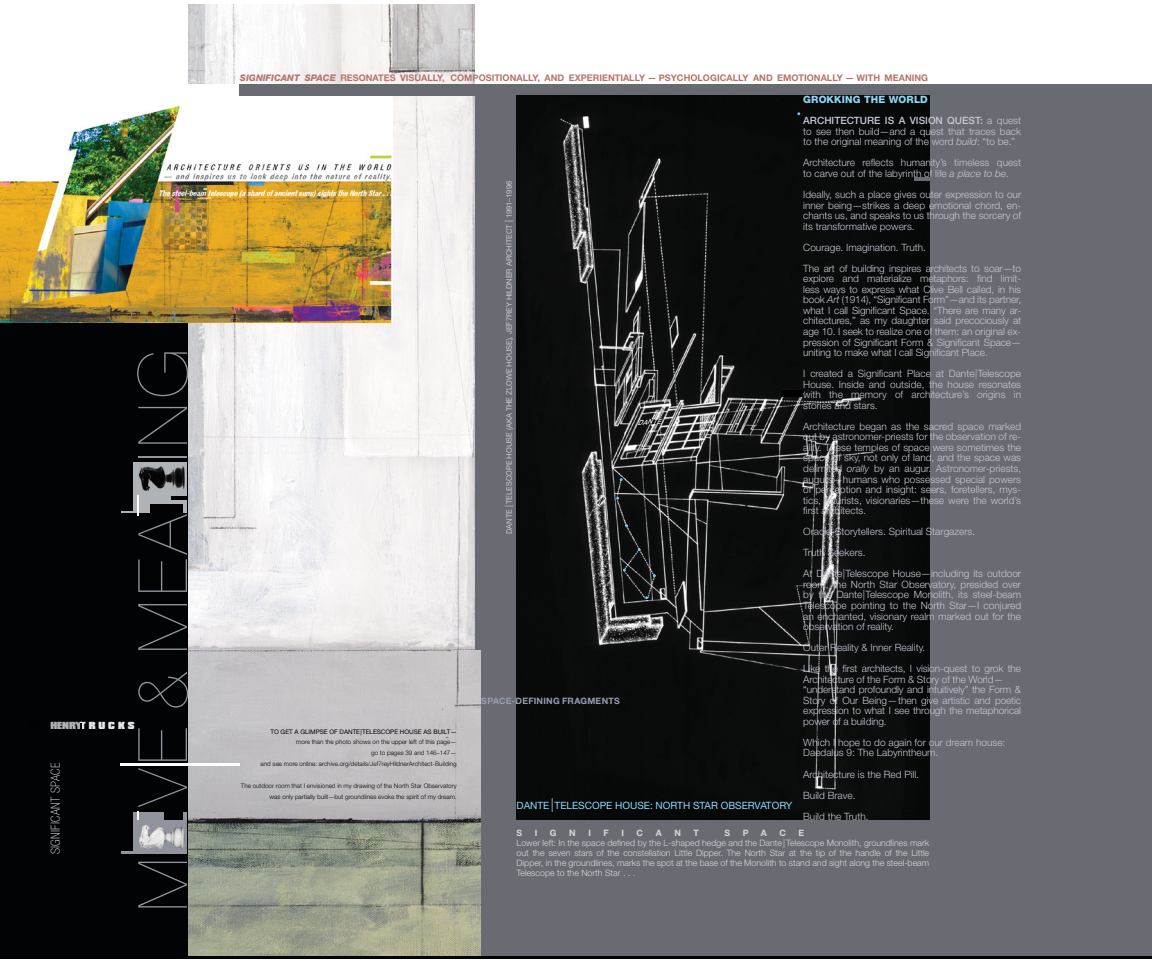
IN HIS BOOK *ART* (1914), TWENTIETH-CENTURY CRITIC CLIVE BELL FOCUSED ON WHAT HE CALLED SIGNIFICANT FORM — I FOCUS ON WHAT I CALL

SIGNIFICANTSPACE

1: *Mont Sainte-Victoire Seen from the Bibemus Quarry*, c. 1897. Paul Cézanne. Oil on canvas. 25.5 x 32 in. The Baltimore Museum of Art. © Public Dom
2: *Seated Figure with Hat*, 1967. Richard Diebenkorn. Oil on canvas. 60 x 60 in. (152.4 x 152.4 cm). Estate #1412. © The Richard Diebenkorn Foundat

Creating what I term Significant Space.


SIGNIFICANT SPACE RESONATES VISUALLY, COMPOSITIONALLY, AND EXPERIENTIALLY — PSYCHOLOGICALLY AND EMOTIONALLY — WITH MEANING
ARCHITECTURE ORIENTS US IN THE WORLD
— and inspires us to look deep into the nature of reality.
The steel-beam telescope (a shard of ancient sun) sights the North Star . . .
MOVE & MEANING
HENRYT RUCKS
SIGNIFICANT SPACE
TO GET A GLIMPSE OF DANTE|TELESCOPE HOUSE AS BUILT—
more than the photo shows on the upper left of this page—
go to pages 39 and 146–147—
and see more online: archive.org/details/JeffreyHildnerArchitect-Building
The outdoor room that I envisioned in my drawing of the North Star Observatory
was only partially built—but groundlines evoke the spirit of my dream.
DANTE | TELESCOPE HOUSE (AKA THE ZLOWE HOUSE), JEFFREY HILDNER ARCHITECT | 1991–1996
SPACE-DEFINING FRAGMENTS
DANTE | TELESCOPE HOUSE: NORTH STAR OBSERVATORY
GROKKING THE WORLD
ARCHITECTURE IS A VISION QUEST: a quest to see then build—and a quest that traces back to the original meaning of the word build: "to be."
Architecture reflects humanity's timeless quest to carve out of the labyrinth of life a place to be.
Ideally, such a place gives outer expression to our inner being—strikes a deep emotional chord, enchants us, and speaks to us through the sorcery of its transformative powers.
Courage. Imagination. Truth.
The art of building inspires architects to soar—to explore and materialize metaphors: find limitless ways to express what Clive Bell called, in his book Art (1914), "Significant Form"—and its partner, what I call Significant Space. "There are many architectures," as my daughter said precociously at age 10. I seek to realize one of them: an original expression of Significant Form & Significant Space—uniting to make what I call Significant Place.
I created a Significant Place at Dante|Telescope House. Inside and outside, the house resonates with the memory of architecture's origins in stories and stars.
Architecture began as the sacred space marked out by astronomer-priests for the observation of reality. These temples of space were sometimes the space of sky, not only of land, and the space was delimited orally by an augur. Astronomer-priests, augurs—humans who possessed special powers of perception and insight: seers, foretellers, mystics, futurists, visionaries—these were the world's first architects.
Oracle-Storytellers. Spiritual Stargazers.
Truth Seekers.
At Dante|Telescope House—including its outdoor room, the North Star Observatory, presided over by the Dante|Telescope Monolith, its steel-beam Telescope pointing to the North Star—I conjured an enchanted, visionary realm marked out for the observation of reality.
Outer Reality & Inner Reality.
Like the first architects, I vision-quest to grok the Architecture of the Form & Story of the World—"understand profoundly and intuitively" the Form & Story of Our Being—then give artistic and poetic expression to what I see through the metaphorical power of a building.
Which I hope to do again for our dream house: Daedalus 9: The Labyrintheum.
Architecture is the Red Pill.
Build Brave.
Build the Truth.
SIGNIFICANT SPACE
Lower left: In the space defined by the L-shaped hedge and the Dante|Telescope Monolith, groundlines mark out the seven stars of the constellation Little Dipper. The North Star at the tip of the handle of the Little Dipper, in the groundlines, marks the spot at the base of the Monolith to stand and sight along the steel-beam Telescope to the North Star . . .

SIGNIFICANT SPACE: Central Park, Manhattan, 1995. Gouache and pencil (charcoal, graphite) on paper. 18 x 24 in.

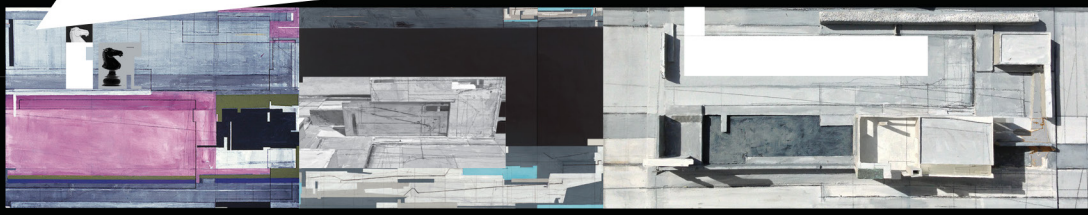
"A transcendent experience is one that takes you out of yourself and connects you at a larger life of existence; in this sense, it means something close to 'spiritual'." —Meriam-Webster

MOVE & MEANING | FORM & STORY

In Dante|Telescope House, I probe architecture's metaphysical structure. I seek fusion of the visible and invisible "to evoke the simultaneous presence of painting and architecture" (as architect-painter Theo van Doesburg put it in 1917) and to evoke the origins of architecture in literature and astronomy, signified by "Dante" and "Telescope." I reach back into architecture's past, when the first buildings were books, the first books were buildings, and the first architects—astronomer-priests—marked out sacred space for the observation of reality.

DANTE: *everlasting, enduring*

Through painting,
I seek to find the Significant Form & Significant Space
of my architecture—the Form-And-Space
Move & Meaning of my architecture.



MOVE & MEANING

"The artist's function is the mythologization of the environment and the world." —Joseph Campbell

"THE PROBLEM IS TO EVOKE THE SIMULTANEOUS PRESENCE OF PAINTING AND ARCHITECTURE." —THEO VAN DOESBURG

NORTH STAR MONOLITH

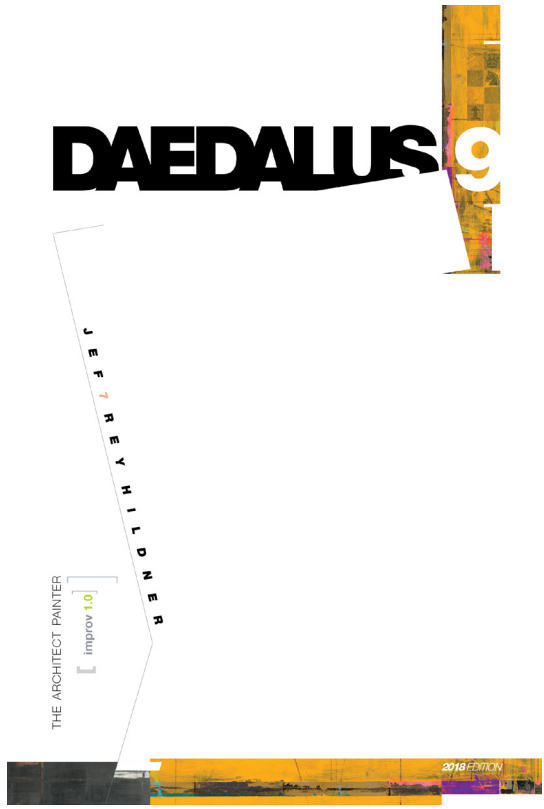
The steel-beam Telescope—
a shard of ancient suns—
cuts through the
Dante|Telescope Monolith
and sights the North Star . . .

SIGNIFICANT ARCHITECTURE — Transcendent Architecture, resonating with Impact & Meaning — requires more than the display of an architect's aesthetic mastery of Form: more than the display of a building's exquisite interplay of materials, space, and light.

IN A WORK OF ART, *EVERYTHING MUST BE FORMED*—BUT THE PURPOSE OF ART GOES BEYOND FORM: "TO MAKE PERCEPTIBLE THE TEXTURE OF THE WORLD IN ALL ASPECTS."
—BORIS MIKHAILOVICH EIKENBAUM

SPACECRAFT. I build on what I see in Diebenkorn's paintings in my work. I build also on what I see in the work of other space-maker painters, sculptors, photographers, and architects.[1] Throughout this book—through page layouts, book covers, collages, drawings, graphic studies, paintings, and buildings—I show various ways that I try to ***spacecraft*** Significant Space and create a language of space-defining form and form-defining space.

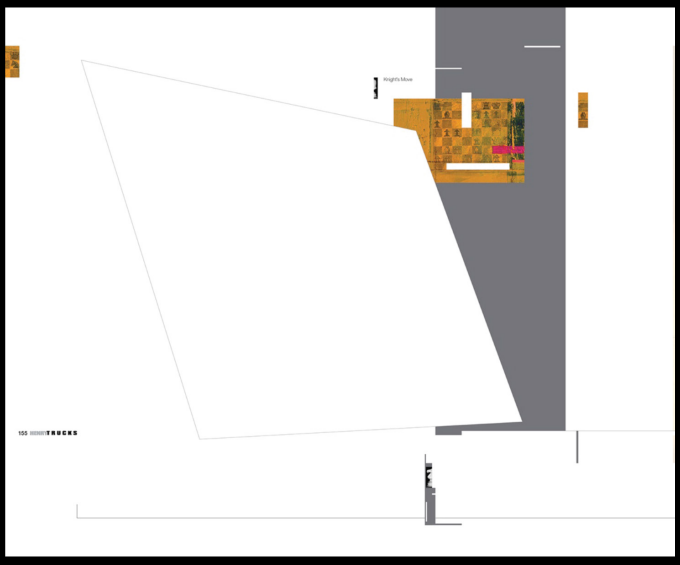
[1] For example: Georges Braque (*Still life with a violin*, 1912), Pablo Picasso (*The Violin*, 1912), Milton Avery (*Nude In Black Robe*, 1950); Sam Francis (Untitled [Edge Painting], 1966); Henry Moore (*Seated Figure Against Curved Wall*, 1956–57); Arnold Newman ("Portrait of Edward Hopper," 1941); Rudolph Schindler (Kings Road House, 1922). See these examples in the online version of this essay: https://archive.org/details/SignificantSpace.



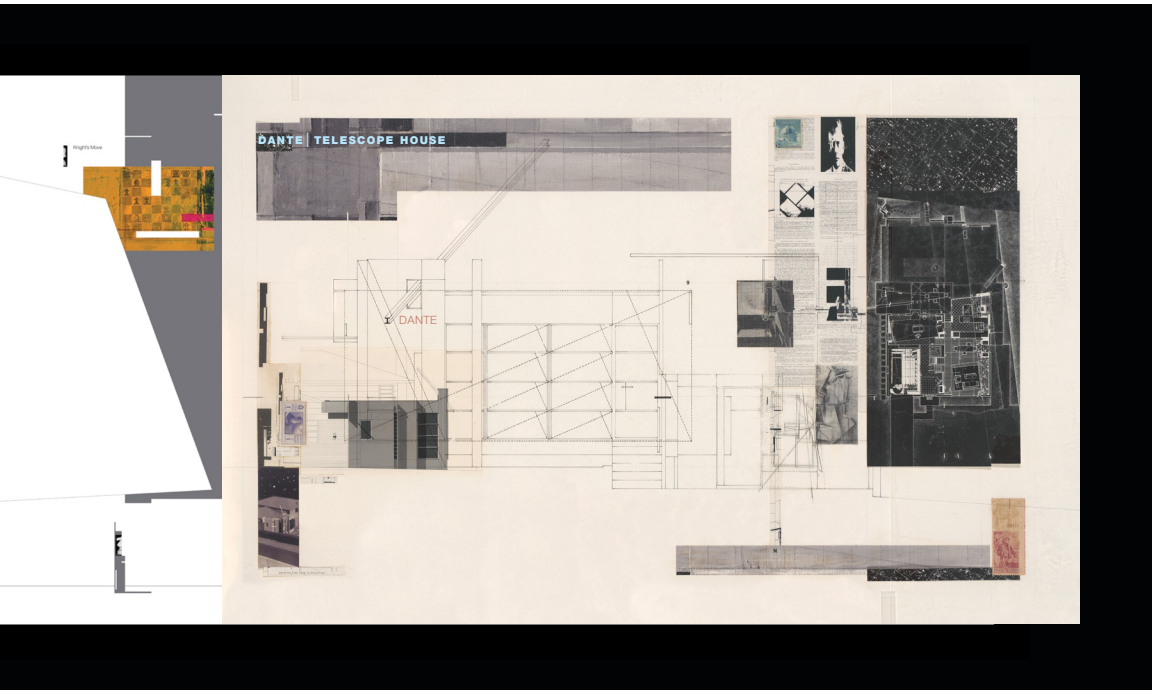
Through a device that I call SpaceCraft—a game of positive-negative form-space-making that shapes the look and feel of both the artwork depicted and the layout of the book.

SPACE-DEFINING FRAGMENTS. *JIGSAW No. 1 | NYT*, 2013. Digital collage on canvas: collage on paper + oil on canvas. 14 x 26 in. Note the "p" for positive and "n" for negative that label a major space-making device that I term **Knight's Move**, one of the many devices that create a matrix of Significant Space, including another trademark device that I term **Jigsaw Design**.

FIGURE | FIELD
FIGURE | FIELD
FIGURE | FIELD


Wright's Move
155 TRUCKS

155 TRUCKS


DANTE | TELESCOPE HOUSE
DANTE

White Knight Formalists tend to charge into the fray, keeping the Black Knight of Content at bay.

I know, because I do this a lot in some of my paintings, which reflect my search for an aesthetic language—
for the rules of my White Knight Abstract Aesthetic System
that can provide the framework for the entrance of my Black Knight Symbolic Image System.

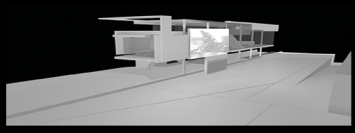
White Knight paintings that Spacecraft plan, section, and elevation in the service of Significant Space.

White Knight paintings like this one titled, where aesthetics I reveal, symbolics I conceal.
Paintings that foreground chess-game Moves (Composition) and background chess-game Meaning (Metaphor).

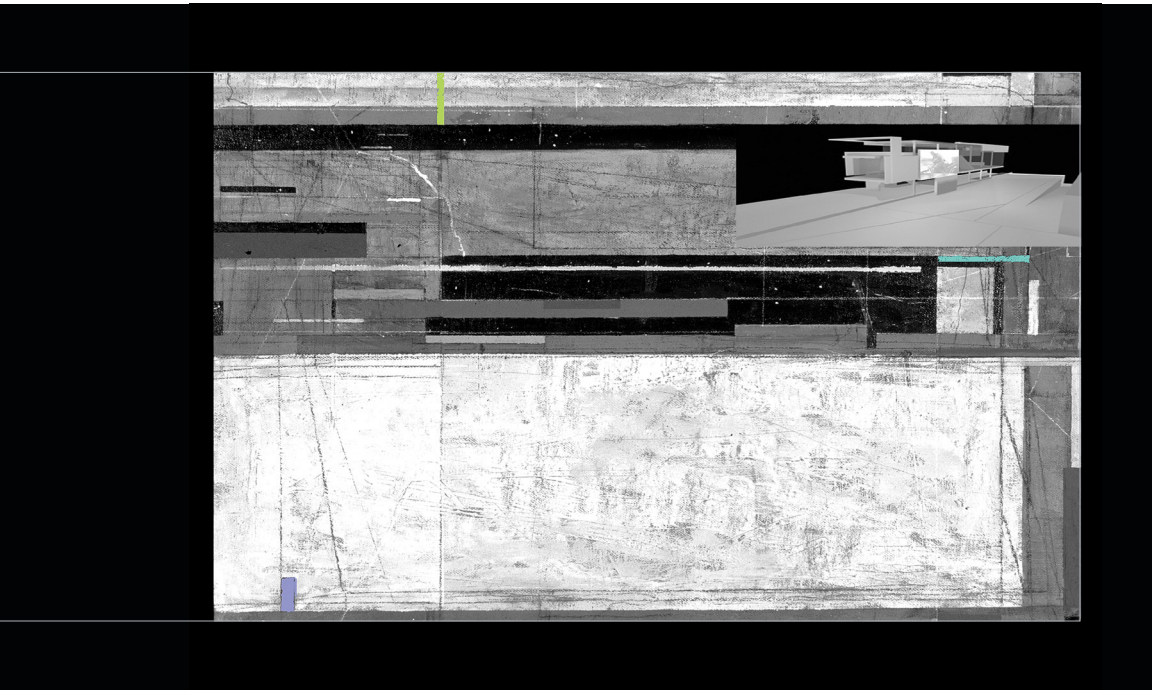
But not entirely, because the Black Knight always radiates its implicit presence . . .
simply waiting to advance onto the game board of the visual arena in a more explicit way.

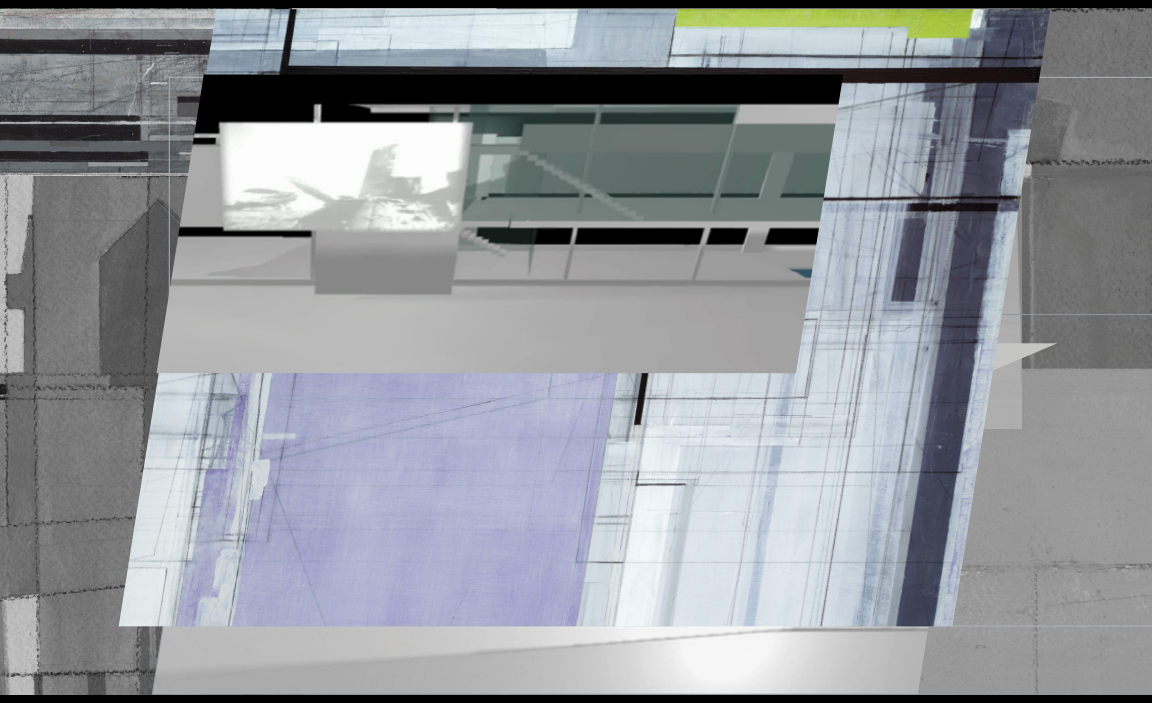
105

Another White Knight: a building.



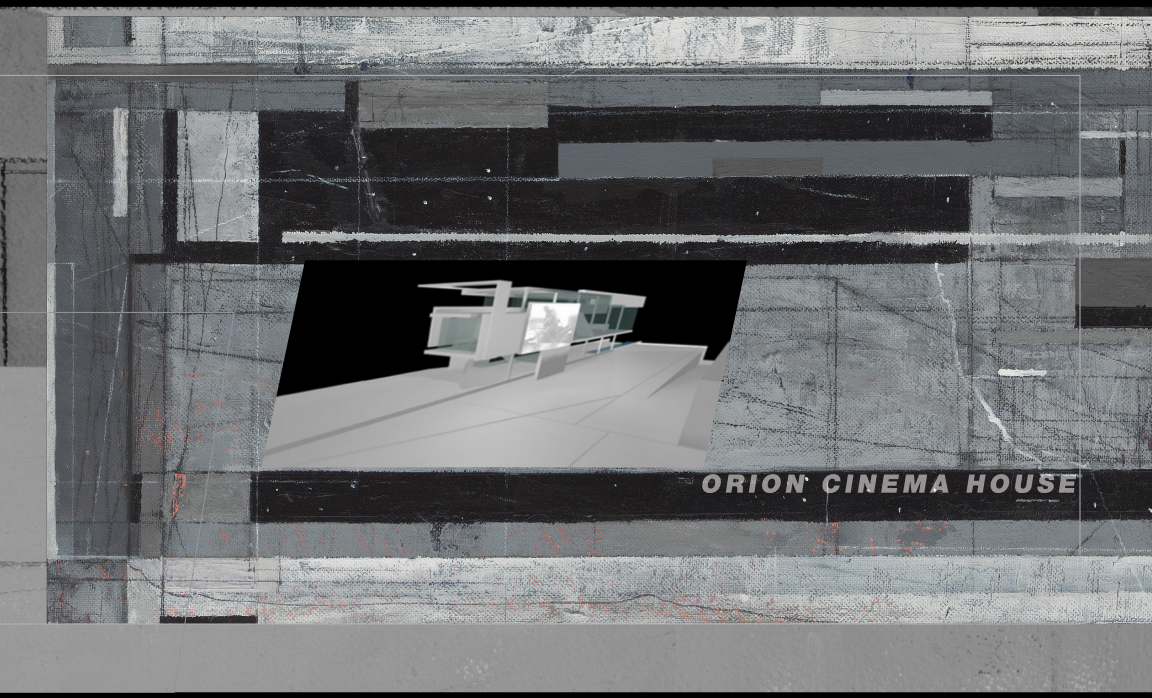
Which springs from a painting.
But you can see and feel the presence of the the Black Knight of Content—
starting to advance.



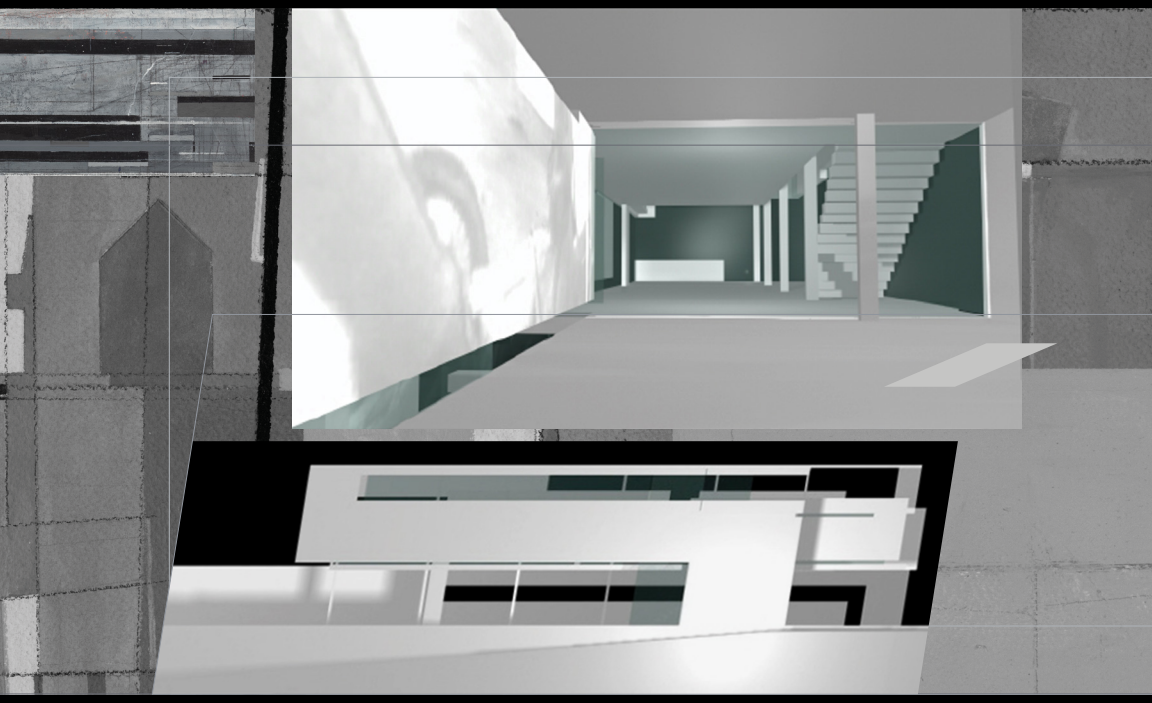


107

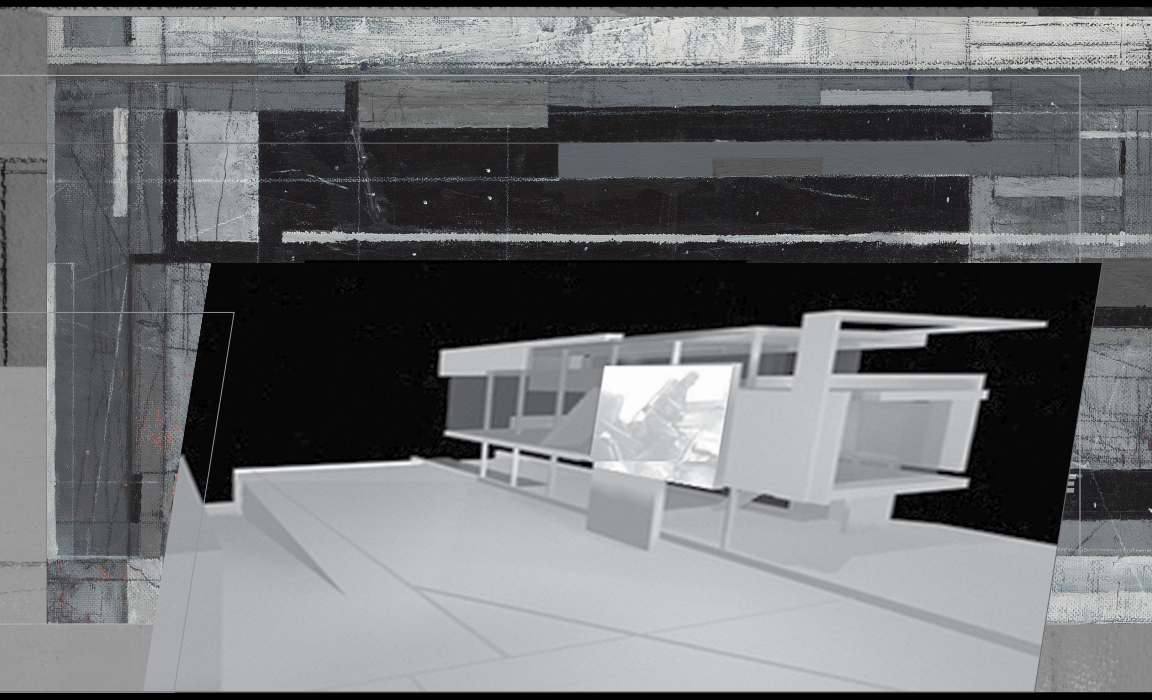
Orion Cinema House.



ORION CINEMA HOUSE

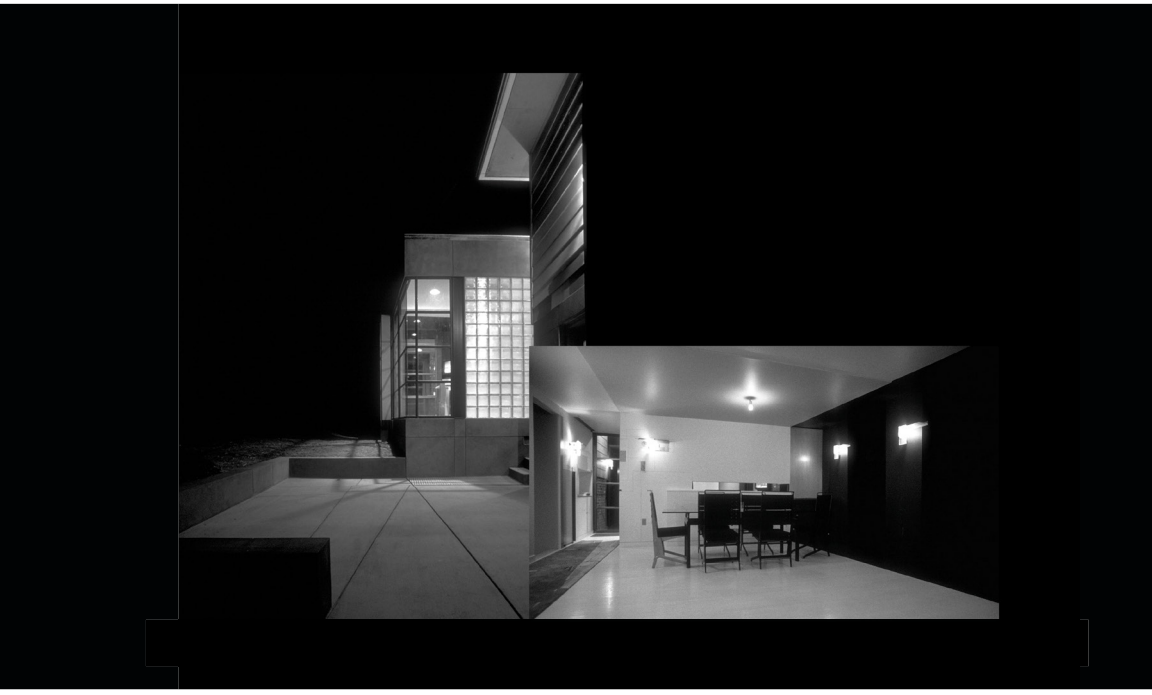


Orion Cinema House.



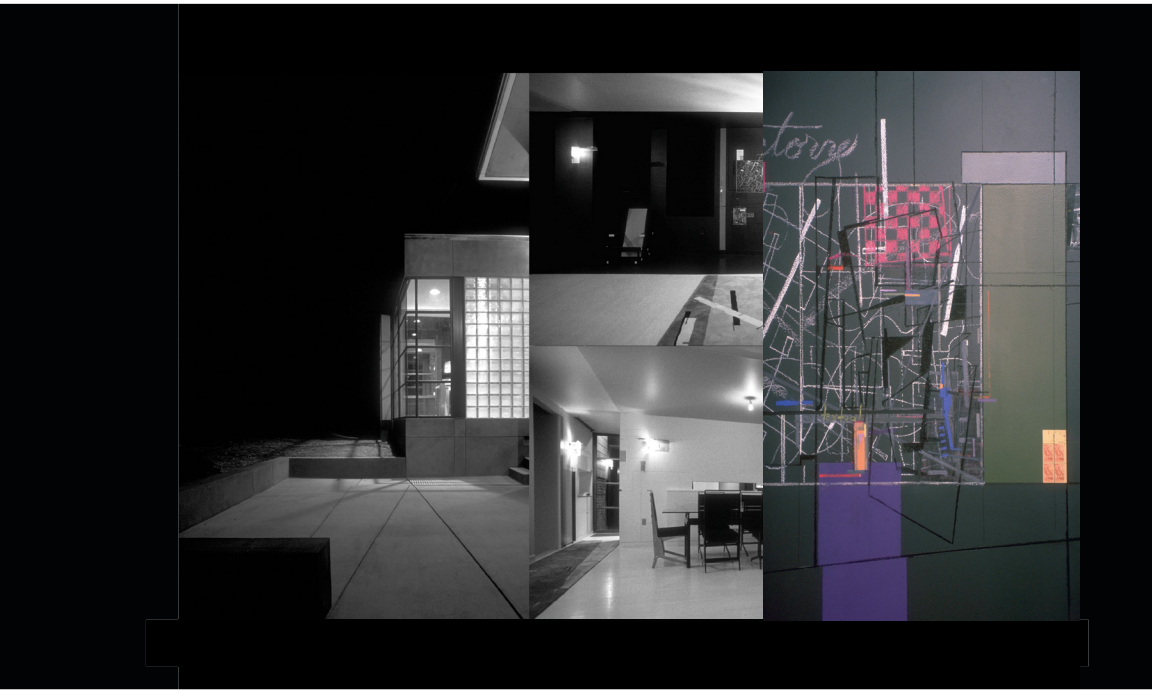
109

Another White Knight angle, more modest, but built.



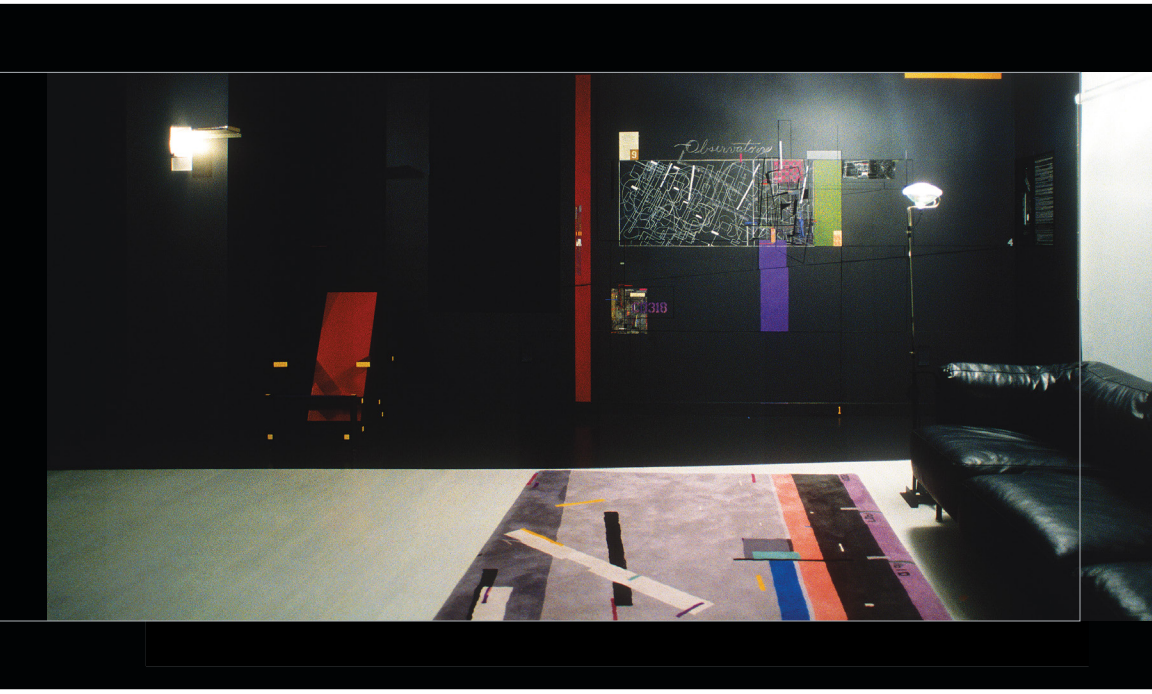
110

And the Black Knight advances even more assertively, making its entrance through the North Star Telescope Rug and the 1:4:9 Observatory Chess Mural—



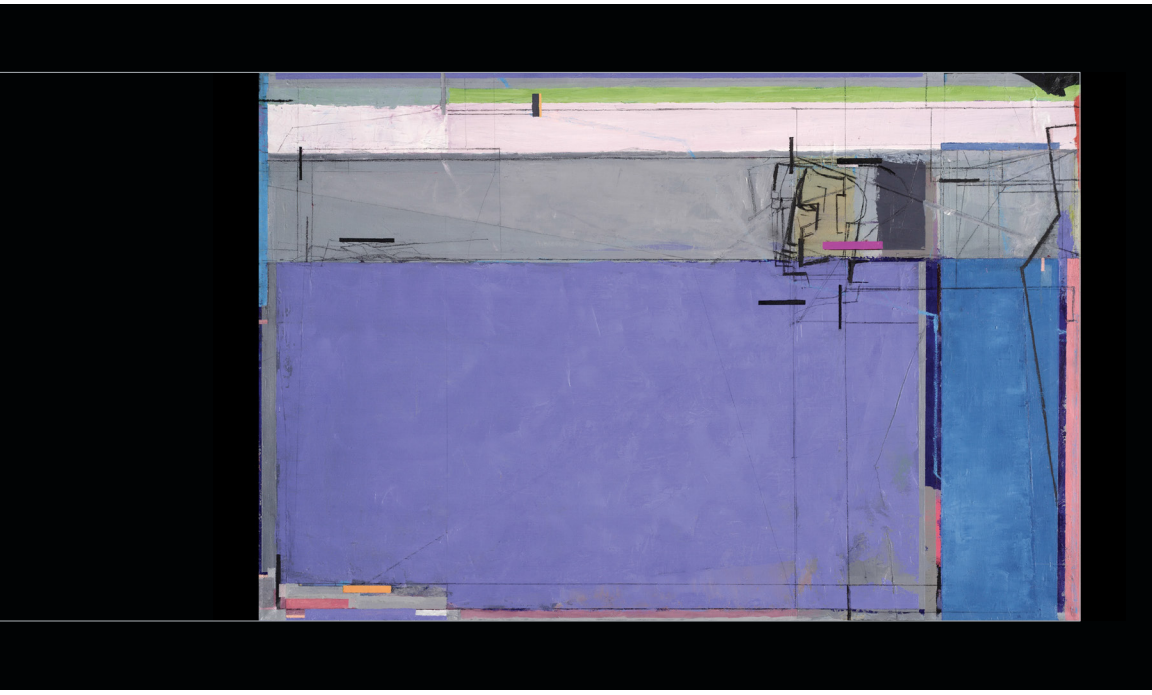
112

Where Chess symbolizes The Labyrinth and its Architect: Daedalus.

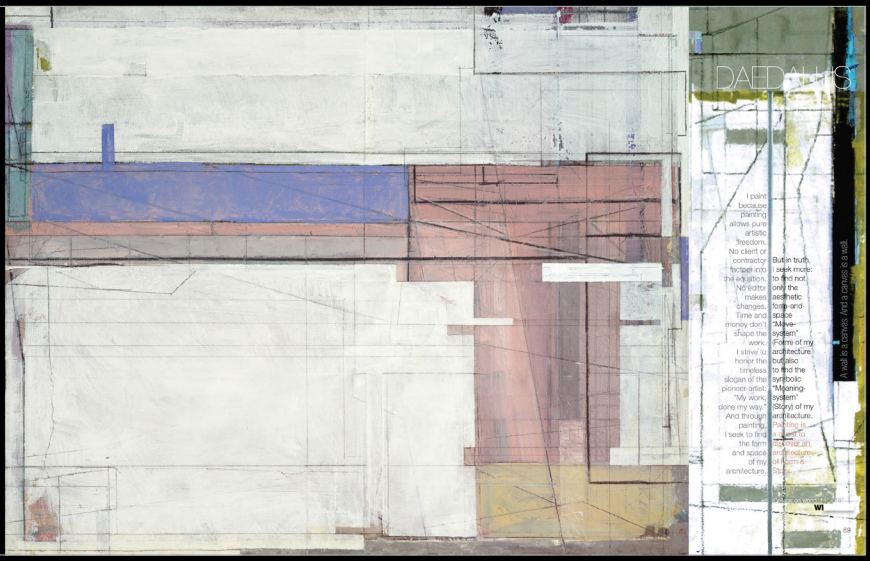

Observatory
318

113

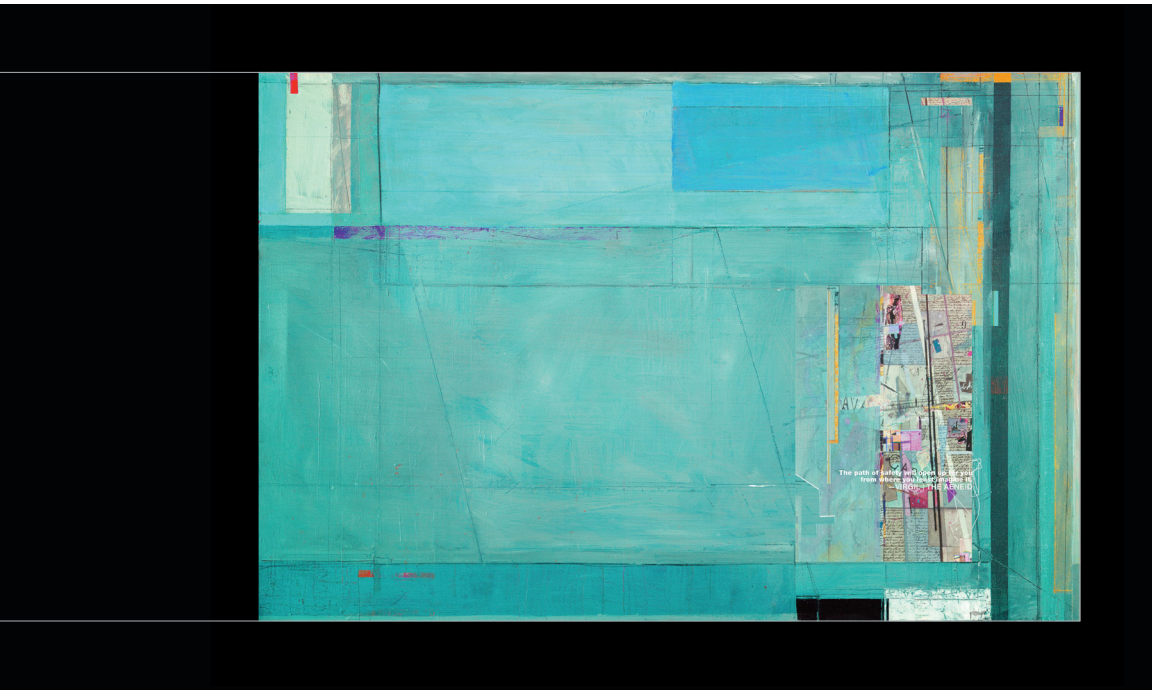
Who also wakes up in this painting.



And here too.


DAEDALUS
I paint because painting allows pure artistic freedom. No client or contractor factors into the equation. No widths makes changes. Time and money don't shape the work. I strive to honor the timeless slogan of the pioneer artist: "My work, done my way." And through painting, I seek to find the form and space of my architecture.
But in truth, I seek more: to find not only the aesthetic body-and-space "Meve-system" Form of my architecture, but also to find the symbolic "Meaning-system" Story of my architecture.
A wall is a canvas. And a canvas is a wall.

In *Ulysses ii*, the Black Knight poet Virgil assures that the labyrinth of life will not defeat you, because “the path of safety will open up for you where you least imagine it.”

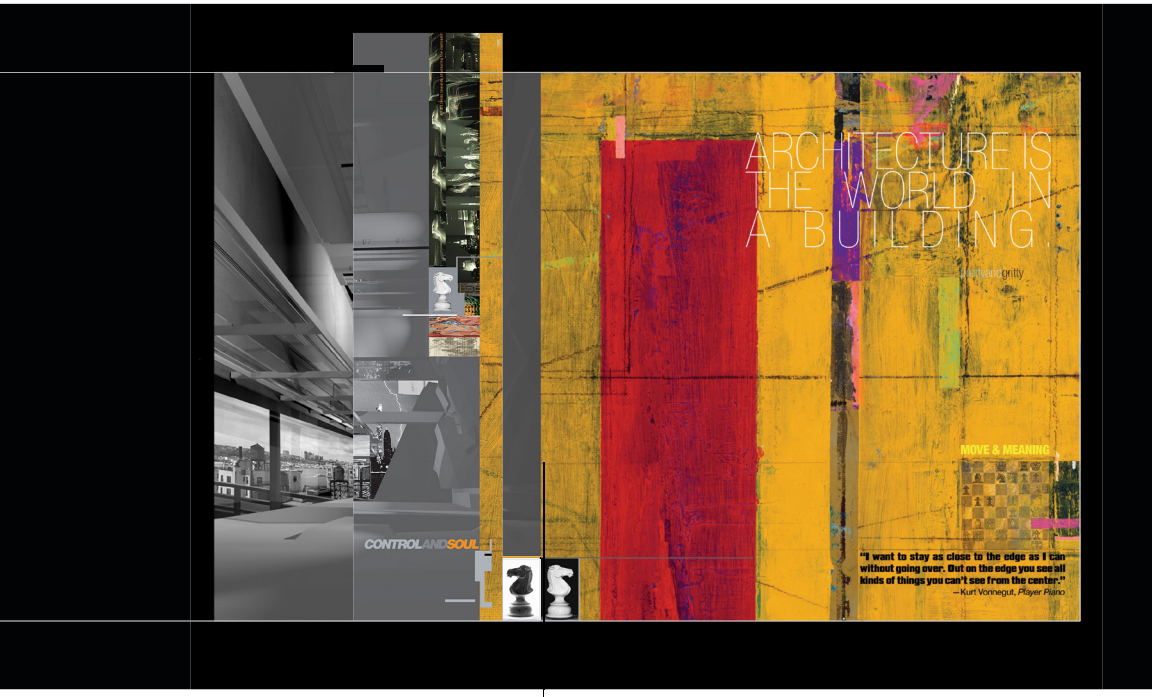

The path of safety will open up for you
from where you least expect it.
VIRGIL - THE AENEID

Ithaca.

Black Knight & White Knight advance together in this layout in *Daedalus 9*: a Move & Meaning collage,

“ARCHITECTURE IS THE WORLD IN A BUILDING.”

Russian Formalism doctrine: Before you can make something, you have to know what it is.

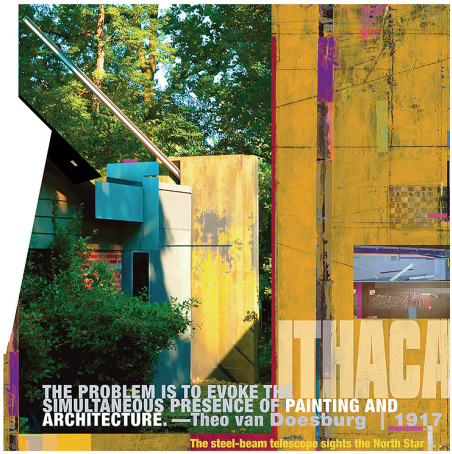

ARCHITECTURE IS THE WORLD IN A BUILDING
Philip Gritty
MOVE & MEANING
"I want to stay as close to the edge as I can without going over. But on the edge you see all kinds of things you can't see from the center."
—Kurt Vonnegut, Player Piano
CONTROLANDSOUL

Figural Space.
Significant Space.

Significant Form!

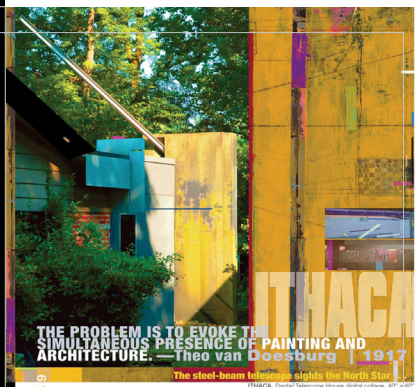
Sometimes I get lucky and get to make something.
I get to build what I know.

Like I did at Dante|Telescope House—
aka The Zlowe House.
Where, thanks to David Zlowe, I got to build my double agent Knight.
And his sword.



ITHACA COLLAGE. *Dante | Telescope House* digital collage. 40 x 40 in. International "Art in Architecture" Exhibition, The Center for Contemporary Art, Bodminster, New Jersey, 2010

119
[SCENE 3: END]



ITHACA, Dante| Telescope House digital collage, 40" x 60"
International "Art in Architecture" Exhibition, The Center for Contemporary Art, Bedminster, New Jersey, 2010

STORY & FORM MANIFESTO 1 | 1991-1996
DANTE | TELESCOPE HOUSE

STORY & FORM MANIFESTO 2 | 2013
THE DAEDALUS PROJECT

DAEDALUS 9
THE ARCHITECT PAINTER

ART PRESENTS MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE.

"Have Ithaca always in your mind.
Your arrival there is what you are destined for."
—poet Constantine P. Cavafy, "Ithaca"

120
[SCENE 4: START]

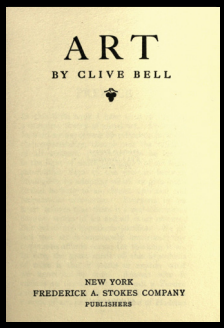
Where does the White Knight of Formalism come from?
From this concept: “Significant Form.”

SIGNIFICANTFORM

⎚ Public Domain. Clive Bell, *Art*, 1914. Title page. Photo via https://babel.hathitrust.org

121

A term coined by art philosopher and critic Clive Bell in his 1914 book, *Art*—in which he defends abstract art

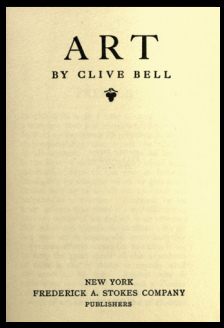


SIGNIFICANTFORM

Form as Content.

Self-sufficient Form.

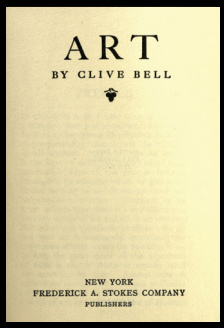
Form released from its age-old obligation in art to allude to content or signify something outside of itself.



SIGNIFICANTFORM

Form as Content.
Form released from its age-old obligation in art to allude to content or signify something outside of itself.
Self-sufficient Form.

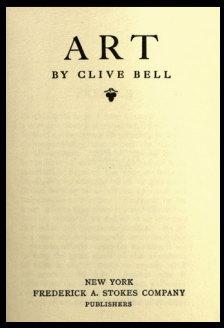
Form that inspires in us, through its aesthetic qualities, a rush of what Bell called “aesthetic emotion.”



SIGNIFICANT FORM CLIVE BELL

Form that inspires in us, through its aesthetic qualities, a rush of "aesthetic emotion"

I label this viewpoint, this approach to art,
“Clive Bell | Type 1 Formalism.”



SIGNIFICANT FORM

Form that inspires in us, through its aesthetic qualities, a rush of "aesthetic emotion"

CLIVE BELL | TYPE 1 FORMALISM

I loved the sound and authority of Bell's term "Significant Form."
Which inspired me to write my essay "Significant Space."

You can read my essay online.
Either a short version @ https://archive.org/details/SignificantSpace

Or an expanded version, which appears in *Henry Trucks—Painter*,
@ https://archive.org/details/
HenryTrucksPainterAncientMythsMeetModernLandscapes

SIGNIFICANTSPACE

SIGNIFICANTFORM

CLIVE BELL | TYPE 1 FORMALISM

Form that inspires in us, through its aesthetic qualities, a rush of "aesthetic emotion"

But I don’t mean the same thing as Bell.

I mean space that inspires in us, through its aesthetic qualities,
a rush of aesthetic emotion—
and also inspires in us, through its metaphorical power,
a rush of *symbolic emotion*.

SIGNIFICANT SPACE

Space that inspires in us, through its aesthetic qualities, a rush of "aesthetic emotion"—and also inspires in us, through its metaphorical power, a rush of *symbolic emotion*.

SIGNIFICANT FORM

Form that inspires in us, through its aesthetic qualities, a rush of "aesthetic emotion"

CLIVE BELL | TYPE 1 FORMALISM

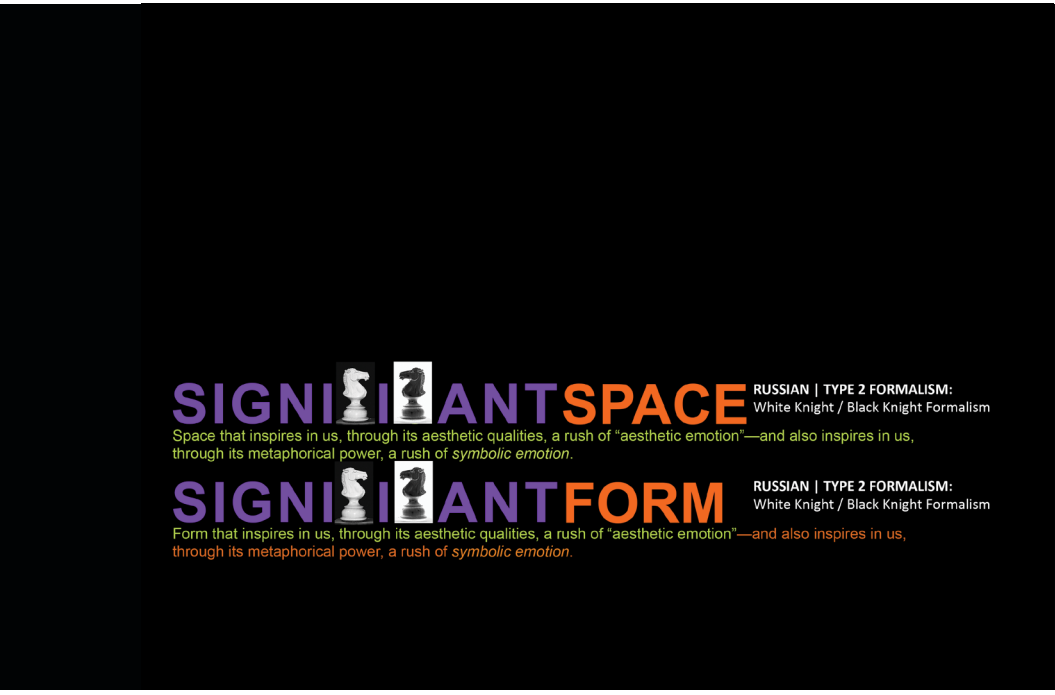
SIGNIFICANTSPACE
Space that inspires in us, through its aesthetic qualities, a rush of "aesthetic emotion"—and also inspires in us, through its metaphorical power, a rush of *symbolic emotion*.
SIGNIFICANTFORM
CLIVE BELL | TYPE 1 FORMALISM
Form that inspires in us, through its aesthetic qualities, a rush of "aesthetic emotion"

128
[SCENE 4: END]

Just like my definition of “Significant Form”—Form as both White Knight and Black Knight.

In other words, I adapted Bell’s take on Significant Form and assigned to it the same double-meaning I assigned to Significant Space: Form that not only inspires in us, through its aesthetic qualities, a rush of what Bell called “aesthetic emotion”—but Form that also inspires in us, through its metaphorical power, a rush of *symbolic emotion*.

My twist on Bell’s meaning of Significant Form shifts the concept from “Clive Bell | Type 1 Formalism” to what I call “Russian | Type 2 Formalism.”



Which puts Significant Form within the same theoretical framework as Significant Space.

A framework very different from Bell-based Formalism, a view of architecture based on the White Knight, only or almost exclusively: Single Knight Formalism.

White Knight Formalism.

By contrast, "Russian | Type 2 Formalism"—which reflects my special take on the insights and implications of the Russian avant-garde during the nineteen-teens and 1920s—asserts a view of architecture based on both Knights, White Knight *and* Black Knight: Double Knight Formalism.

White Knight / Black Knight Formalism.

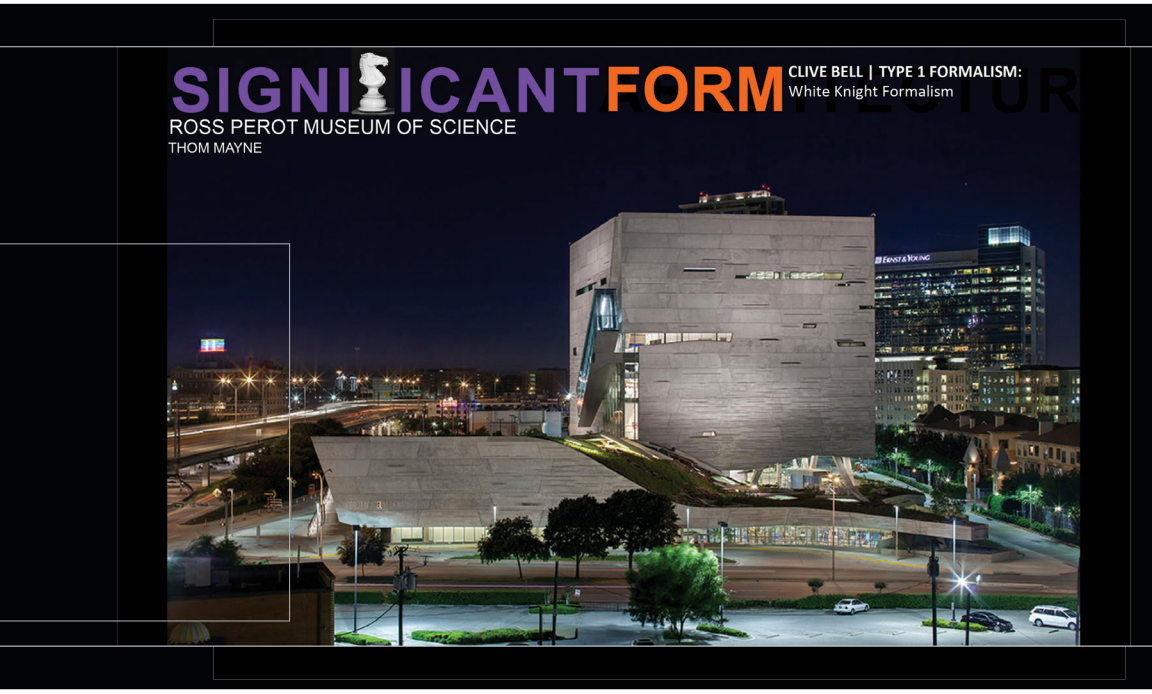
Above: © Morphosis, Ross Perot Museum of Science, 2012. Photos via www.morphosis.com
Opposite Page: © Unknown. Morphosis, Ross Perot Museum of Science, 2012. Photo via www.inparkmagazine.com

129
[SCENE 5: START]

Example of Bell's concept of Significant Form: a White Knight building? Thom Mayne's Ross Perot Museum of Science in Dallas.

Mayne's Grandmaster level chess piece hovers on the checkerboard map of Dallas—and on the Gaudi-like wavy 3D chessboard of the museum's site.

Mayne presents a stage set for the drama of life starring two cubes and their aerodynamic platform: one cube solid, the other cube void—the Gray Cube of Form and its partner, the Empty Cube of Space that serves as the building's entry court.



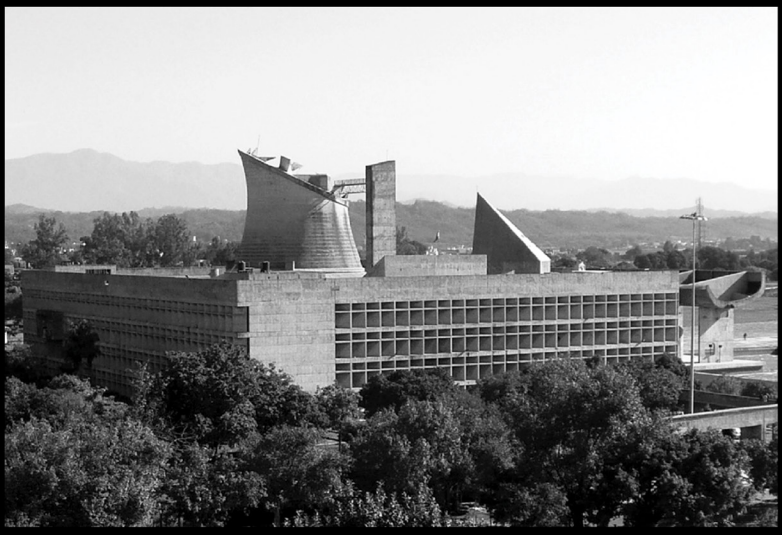
Mayne's 2012 Gray Cube echoes Molnar's 1923 Red Cube.
Mayne integrates the Gray Cube chess piece into the chessboard of its site.

Meaning resides primarily in abstract Form—
sensational, sculptural geometric form, shaped by the dynamic spirit and forces of the adjacent highway.

Talk about a rush of aesthetic emotion. I was there. Wow.

© Adrián MALLOL. Le Corbusier, Palace of Assembly, Chandigarh, India, 1955. Photo via www.greatbuildings.com

Le Corbusier. Palace of Assembly, Chandigarh, India, 1955.



131

A different type of Significant Form. An expression of Russian-based Type 2 Formalism.

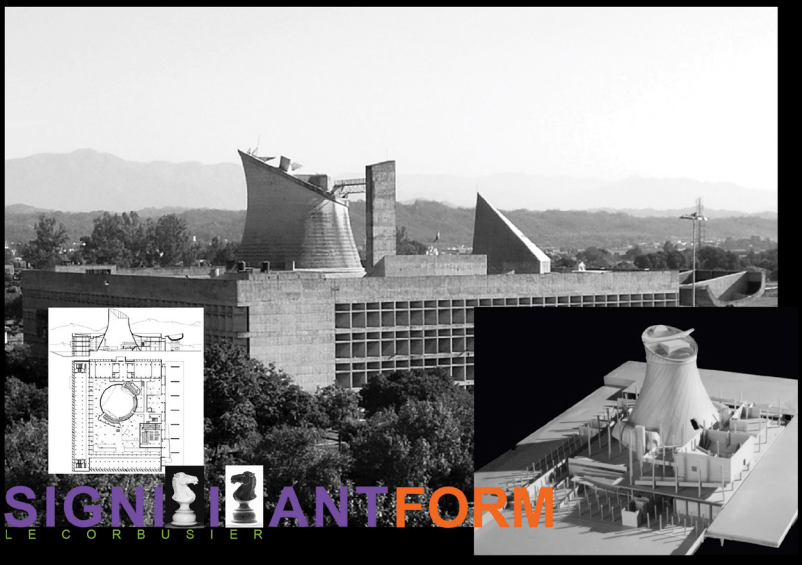
SIGNIFICANTFORM
LE CORBUSIER
RUSSIAN | TYPE 2 FORMALISM:
White Knight / Black Knight Formalism

SIGNIFICANTFORM
LE CORBUSIER
RUSSIAN | TYPE 2 FORMALISM:
White Knight / Black Knight Formalism

© Vikramaditya Prakash. Palace of Assembly, by Le Corbusier, at Chandigarh, India, 1953 to 1963. Chandigarh Assembly Model by UW students in Indian Modernism class of Vikramaditya Prakash, 2012. Photo via www.youtube.com

The world in a chess box. An off-center cosmic mountain of Significant Form and Significant Space rises through the columnar trees of the dark forest to catch the sunlight—
and bring clarity, wisdom, and truth down to the lawmakers assembled in the sacred chamber of the mountain's core.

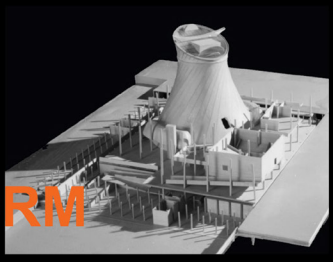
Look at that Significant Section! Exquisitely hierarchical and spatial . . . way more empty than full.


SIGNIFICANTFORM
LE CORBUSIER

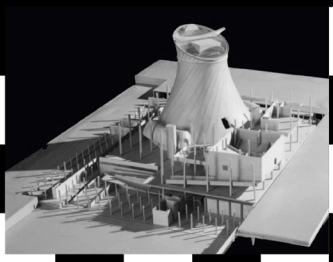
Corb presents the assembly chamber as a chess piece on the chessboard of architecture . . .

SIGNIFICANTFORM

LE CORBUSIER

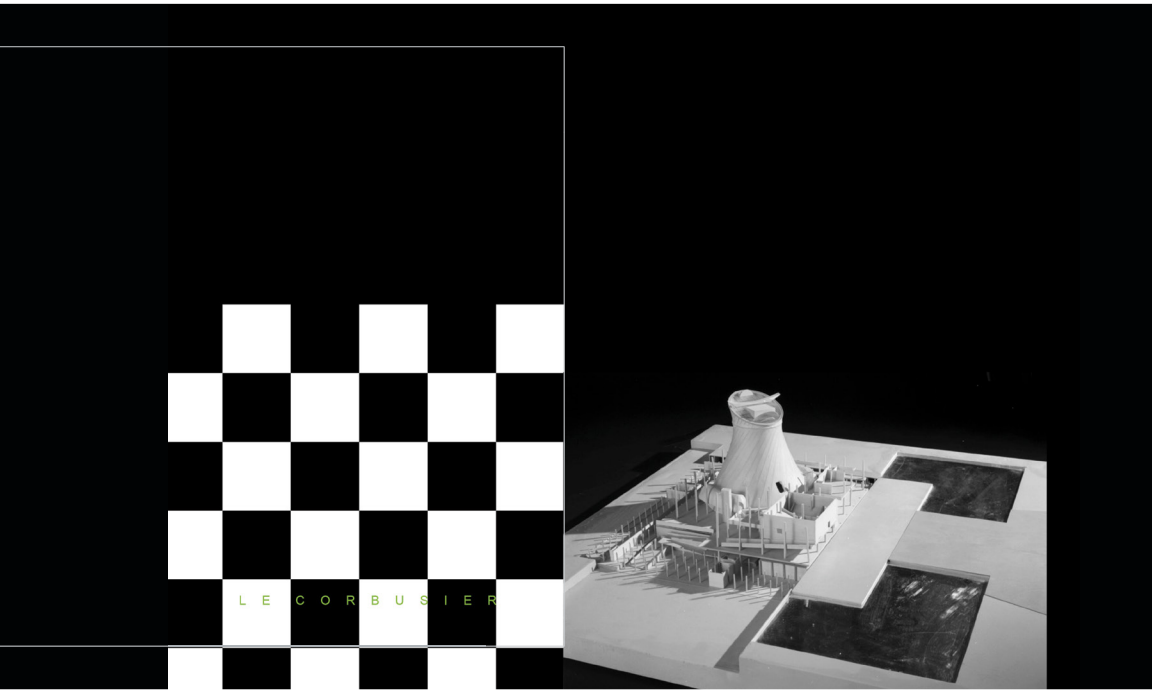


L E C O R B U S I E R



I hear Corb say through this building, his reinforced concrete poem:

Architecture is Form. Oh, yes! But architecture is also something else, something more than geometry, material aesthetics, and the exquisite composition of masses assembled in light.
Architecture is a work of surpassing quality that stirs in us a rush of symbolic emotion . . .

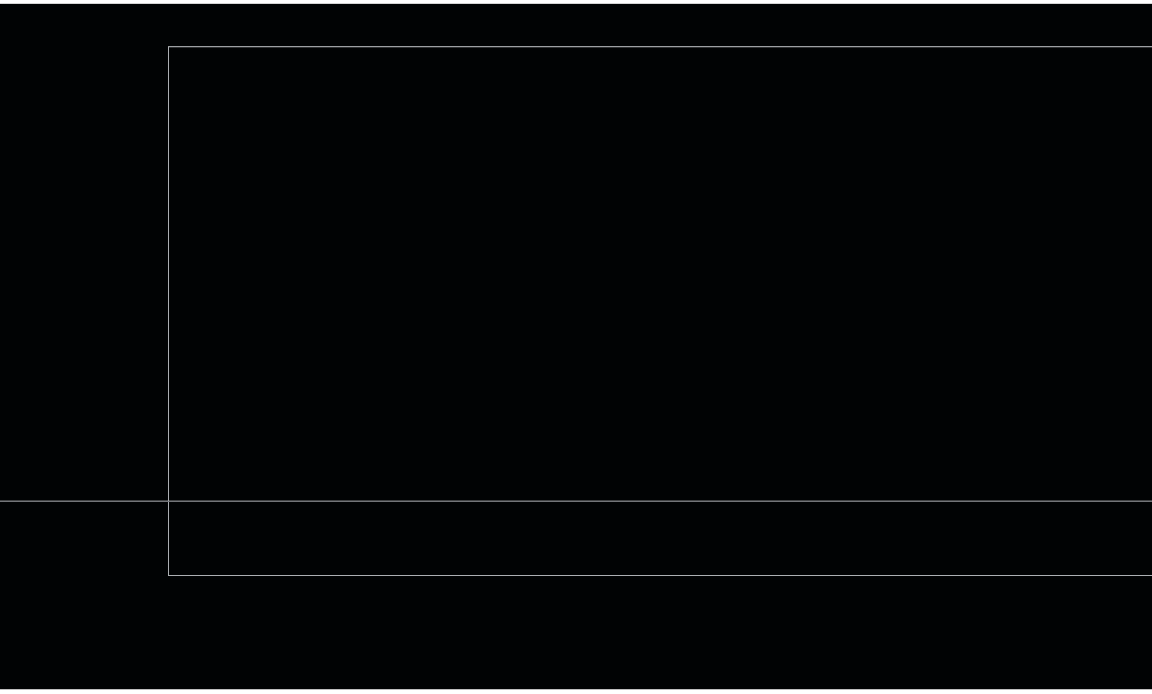

LE CORBUSIER

© Bjanka Kadic. Le Corbusier, Palace of Assembly, Chandigarh, India, 1955. Photo via Alamy stock photos www.alamy.com

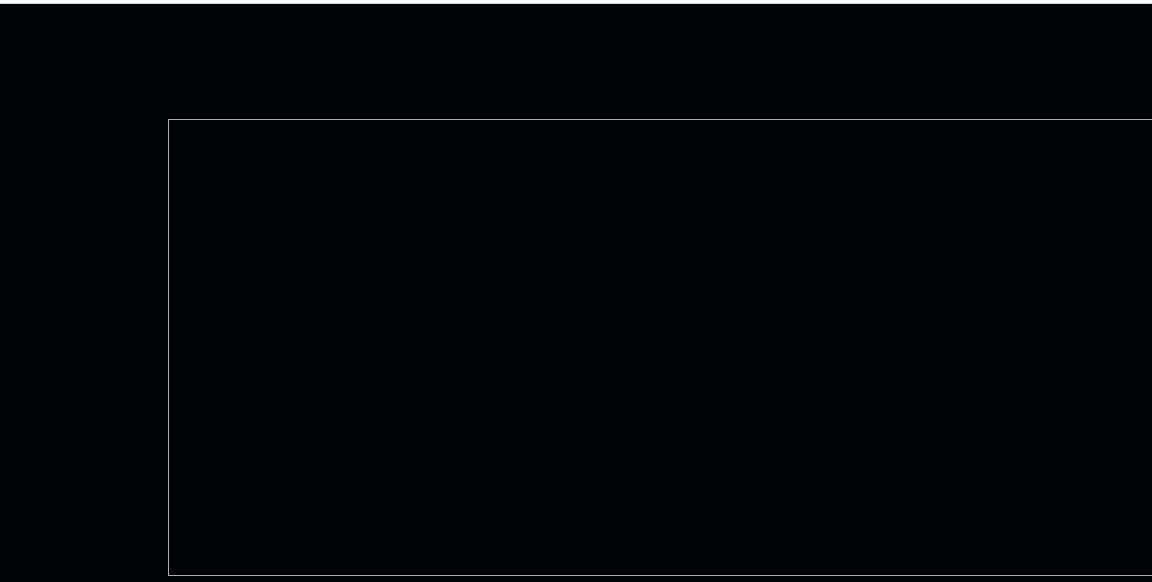
because at its best—at its root, its orlgins—architecture captures the light of profound poetic meaning
and radiates that laser-light down into the sacred chamber of our core.
Because architecture is also metaphor.

Le Corbusier created the world in a building.

And he made a mountain his Knight.



138
[SCENE 5: END]



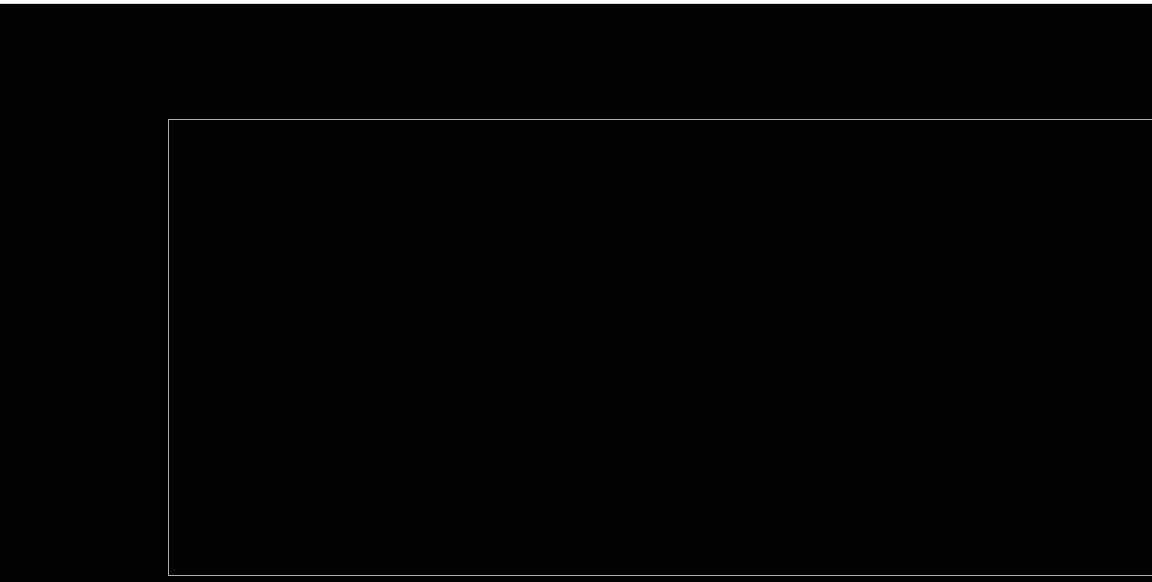
© Danjaq, LLC. James Bond. Photo via www.007.com

139
[SCENE 6: START]

All Formalists are Superheroes.
On a Superhero F-Quest: to serve and protect Form.

Either as White Knight Superhero James Bond.
A White Knight Superhero, who knows how to win.
Through style, smarts, and stealth.
And doesn't need or want a Black Knight sidekick.

All Formalists are Superheroes.



© 2015 Danjaq, LLC, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios Inc., Columbia Pictures Industries, Inc. Movie poster for *Spectre*, 2015.
Photo via https://paultan.org

Just a cool car, like this Austin Martin DB10: an outer expression of his outer self.
Like him—sexy, fast, and dangerous.

All Formalists are Superheroes.

© Paramount Pictures and Marvel Enterprises. Still from *Iron Man*, 2008. Photo via http://variety.com

141
[SCENE 6: END]

Or as White Knight/Black Knight Superhero Tony Stark, who powers up in a suit of armor to become his alter ego Iron Man—
an outer expression of his inner self.

In other words, tech-genius Stark designed and built his hyper-aestheticized White Knight robotic suit of armor to give tangible, external projection to his idealized, inner self-image.
His idealized Black Knight superhero nature.

Tony Stark engineered and fabricated a Symbolic Machine.
His avatar.

All Formalists are Superheroes.

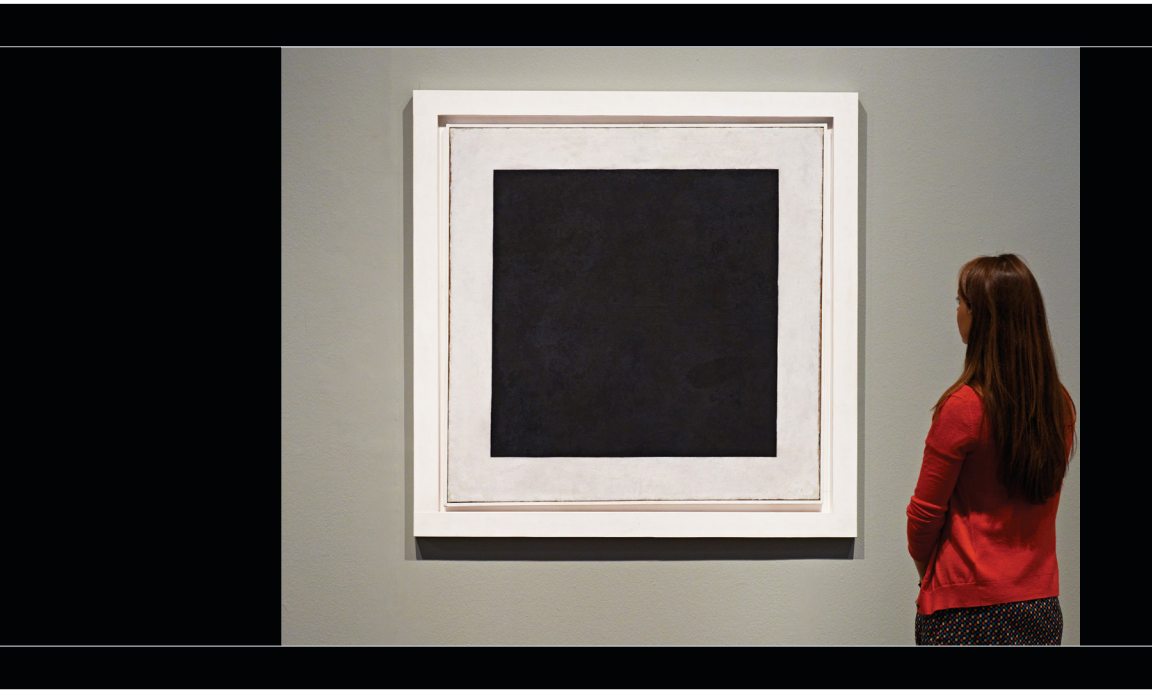
© Mich Theiner via *The Independent*. "The old black: A visitor looks at Malevich's 'Black Square' at Tate Modern," 2014. Kazimir Malevich, *Black Square*, 1915. Photo via http://www.independent.co.uk

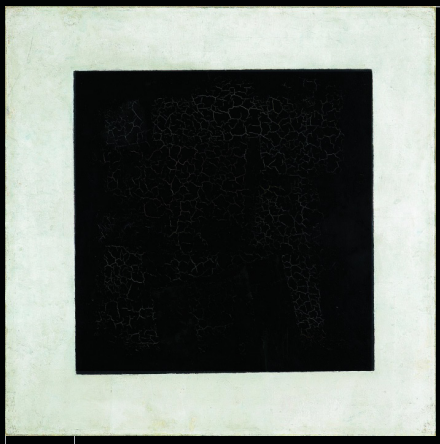
142

[SCENE 7: START]

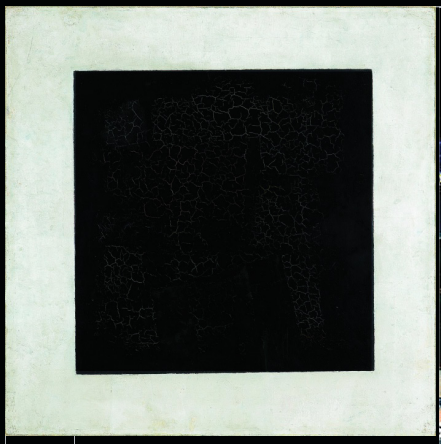
Which brings us to Malevich's *Black Square*, 1915—the first abstract painting. James Bond or Iron Man in a tux?
The kind of question that threw Malevich's RF friends for a loop.
Did Malevich paint a White Knight: a picture free from associations with the outside world?

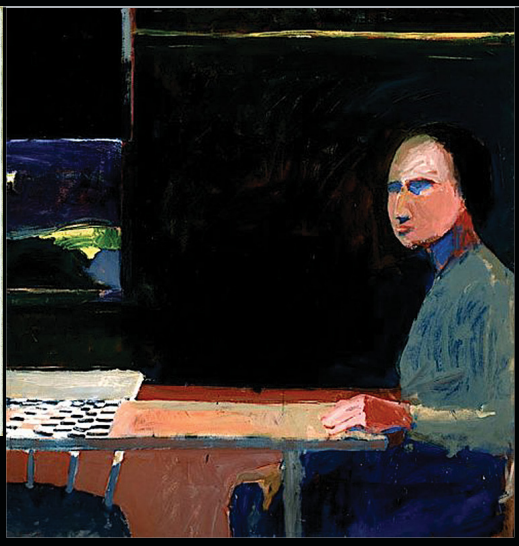
Apply the technique of basic geometry to a canvas—reduce the world to symmetry, to an empty square rectangle of black paint in a square rectangle of white paint.
But pretty tough not to see this black square as a metaphor.
To stand and gaze through this square window deep into the night sky and search for stars.





⓪ Public Domain. Kazimir Malevich, *Black Square*, 1915. Photo via http://www.wikiart.org

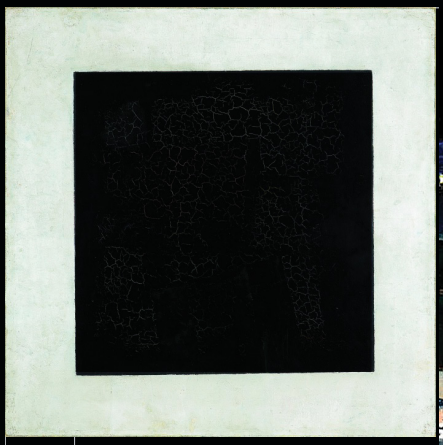


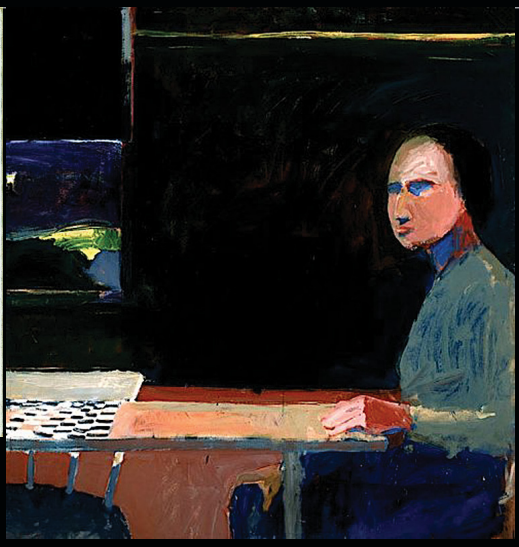


144

Richard Diebenkorn found it in his black square painting,
Woman and Checkerboard (1956).

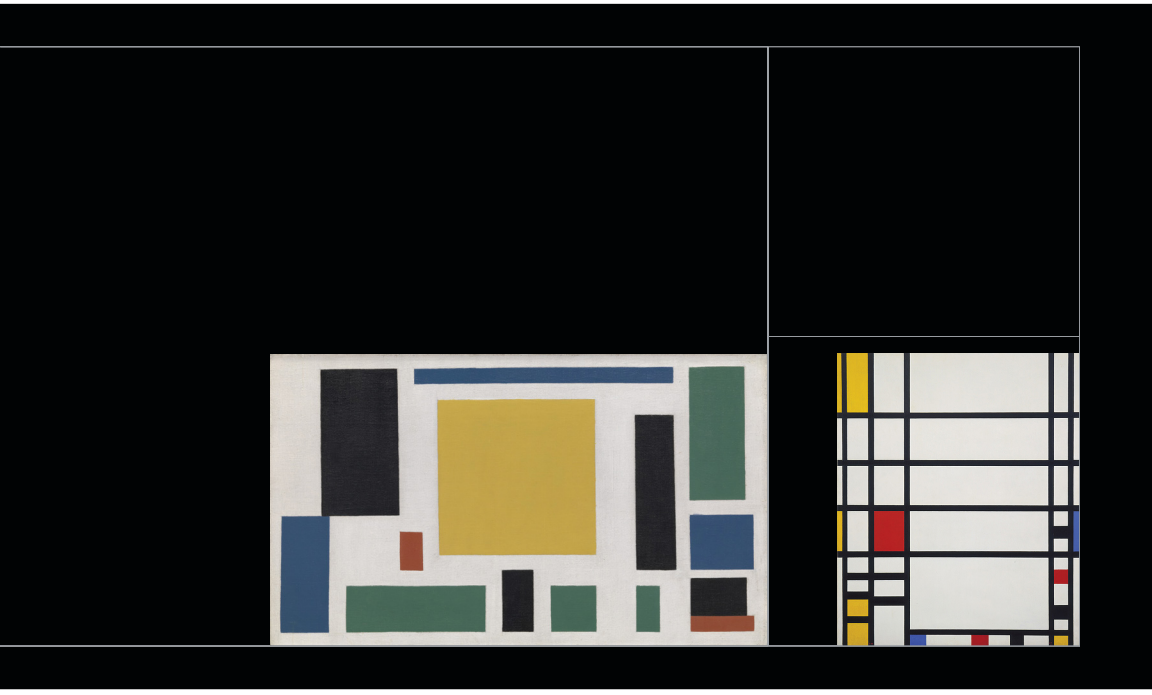
© SBMA, Museum purchase, Second Pacific Coast Biennial Fund. Richard Diebenkorn, *Woman and Checkerboard*, 1956. Photo via http://collections.sbma.ne.

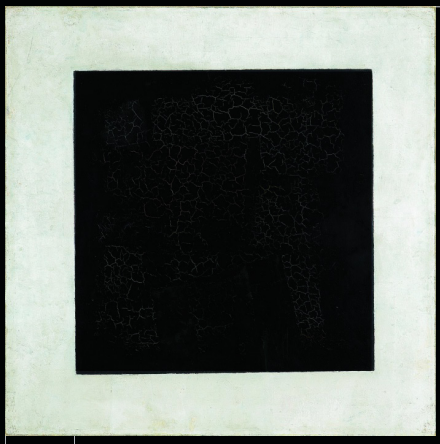




145

Or search for Van Doesburg’s cow or Mondrian’s trees.





⊘ Public Domain. Kazimir Malevich, *Self-Portrait*, 1933. Photo via http://www.wikiart.org

146
[SCENE 7: END]

When the Russian State outlawed abstract art,
Malevich signed his non-abstract paintings, like the signature in the lower right corner of this self-portrait, with his new name:
the black square.

The black square became an outer symbol of his inner ID.
He turned an abstract rectangle into a symbolic rectangle.

147
[SCENE 8: START]

The Symbolic Rectangle takes all kinds of forms.

THESYMBOLICRECTA GLE

© 2017 Jasper Johns / Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY. Jasper Johns, *Flag*, 1954–55.

Flags.

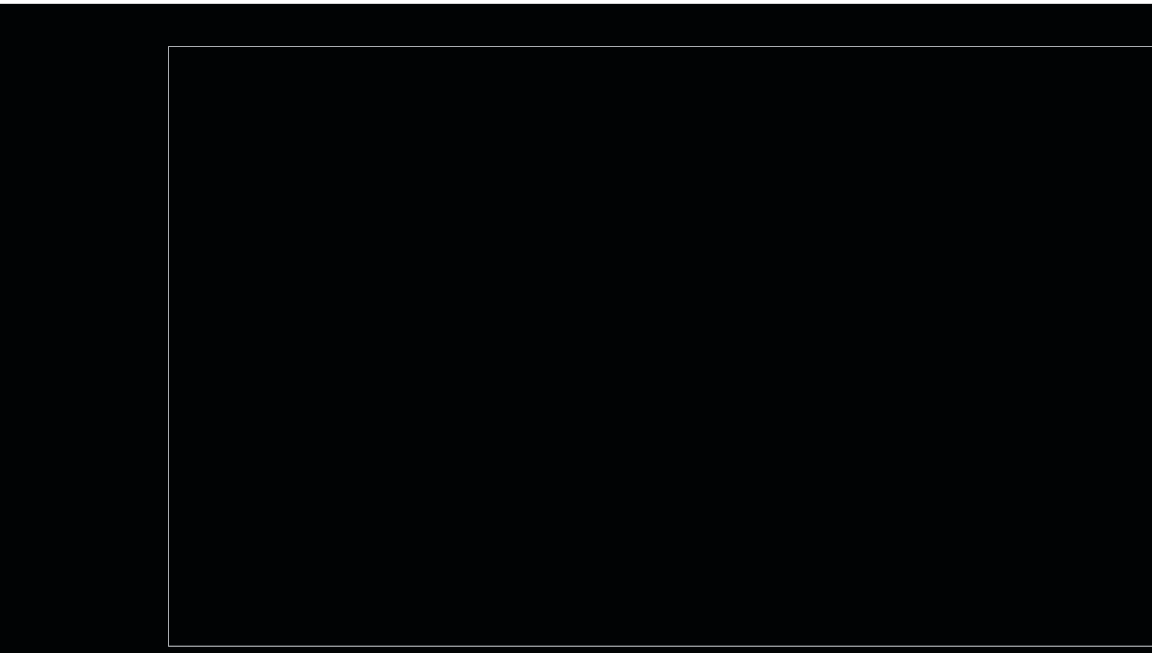
Notes from the 1776 Continental Congress and books about the US flag published more recently by the House of Representatives help us appreciate the depth of meaning of the symbolic rectangle that we call The Stars and Stripes. The 13 stripes represent the 13 original colonies that banded together to declare their independence from Britain and establish a sovereign nation.

• "The star is a symbol of the heavens and the divine goal to which man has aspired from time immemorial; the stripe is symbolic of the rays of light emanating from the sun."

• “White signifies purity and innocence, Red, hardiness & valour, and Blue . . . signifies vigilance, perseverance & justice.”

(http://www.colonialflag.com/symbolism-of-the-red-white-and-blue/)

Jasper Johns, through the thick and turbulent texture of paint layered over a collage made from found materials such as newspaper,
tried to turn the American flag from a symbolic rectangle into an aesthetic rectangle—or at least level the playing field.



⊘ Public Domain. Theo van Doesburg. *De Stijl*, Cover: Vol. 05, No. 12, 1924–1925.

Magazines. Magazine Covers.

Like this one by van Doesburg for *De Stijl*. (Translation: “Style.”)
And as we expect of a magazine cover, it conveys both aesthetic choices *and* information. Move & Meaning. Which partner to create an expression of a signature artistic style.

(Van Doesburg cofounded the magazine *De Stijl* with Mondrian in 1917, but Mondrian withdrew in 1923, because he didn’t like that van Doesburg used diagonal elements in his work. In fact, the device of the diagonal ended their friendship. Yes, aesthetic choices and the meaning, the symbolic import, of those aesthetic choices? A big deal.)

DE STIJL
NB
ZESDE JAARGANG 1924-1925
12
INTERNATIONAAL MAANDBLAD
VOOR NIEUWE KUNST WETEN-
SCHAP EN KULTUUR REDACTIE
THEO VAN DOESBURG
WARSCHAU
LEIDEN HANNOVER PARIJS BRNO WEENEN

℗ Public Domain. Theo van Doesburg and Piet Mondrian, *De Stijl*, p. 161, November 1921.

150

Magazine Pages.

DE STIJL

MAANDBLAD VOOR NIEUWE KUNST, WETENSCHAP EN KULTUUR. REDACTIE: THEO VAN DOESBURG. ABONNEMENT BINNENLAND F 6.–, BUITENLAND F 7.50 PER JAARGANG. ADRES VAN REDACTIE EN ADMINISTR. HAARLEMMERSTRAAT 73A LEIDEN (HOLLAND).

4e JAARGANG No. 11. NOVEMBER 1921.

LETTERKLANKBEELDEN (1921)

IV (in dissonanten)

U^{l} J— m^{l} n^{l}
U J— m^{l} n^{l}
V— F— K^{l} Q^{l}
F^{l} V— Q^{l} K^{l}
X^{l} Q^{l} V^{l} W^{l}
X^{l} Q^{l} W V
U^{l} J— m— n—
g^{l}
A— O— P^{l} B^{l}
A— O— P^{l} B^{l}
D— T— O^{l} E—
d t o e
O^{l} E^{l}
B^{l} D^{l}
Z^{l} C S B P D
j

Aanteekening: te lezen van links naar rechts. Voor de teekens zie men Stijl no. 7.

X-Beelden (1920)

hé hé hé
hebt gij 't lichaamlijk ervaren
hebt gij 't lichaamlijk ervaren
hebt gij 't li **CHAAM** lijk er **VA** ren

O^{n}

— ruimte en
— tijd
verleden heden toekomst
het achterhierenginds
het doorelkaâr van 't niet en de verschijning

kleine verfrommelde almanak
die men ondersteboven leest

MIJN KLOK STAAT STIL

ZIG – ZAG uitgekauwd sigaretteeindje op't
WITTE SERVET

vochtig bruin
ontbinding
GEEST
346 **VRACHT AU TO MO BIEL**

DWARS trillend onvruchtbaar middelpunt

caricatuur der zwaarte
uomo electrico

rose en grauw en diep wijnrood
de scherven van de kosmos vind ik in m'n thee

Aanteekning: O^{n}: te lezen nul^{n}: — ruimte en — tijd: te lezen min ruimte en min tijd.

© CSPS. Jeffrey Hildner, “Time, Space, Matter,” *The Christian Science Journal*, July 2005, pp44–45.

Which I myself created as a magazine architect for many years. Including pages for articles that I wrote like this one.

Magazine architecture required that I create a visual synergistic partnership between The Aesthetic Rectangle and The Symbolic Rectangle.

I hadn’t come up with those terms yet. But I knew that’s what I was doing. The name of the game.

1905 At the age of 26, an unknown Swiss patent clerk who worked on physics in his spare time published four brilliant papers that revolutionized science and altered the way we view the world. He announced that E=mc² (translation: matter can be converted to energy—more energy than anyone could dream of, because the speed of light [c] clocks out at a staggering 186,000+ miles per second). He proved that atoms exist. He said that Newton was wrong: Light is not a wave, but a stream of tiny bundles of energy, and distances and durations are not independent and absolute. His discoveries shattered common-sense conceptions about the form and structure of the universe—sending shock waves through the cosmos of thought.

Time magazine named Albert Einstein the most influential person of the 20th century. And 2005 marks the 100th anniversary of his "miracle year." Einstein's paradigm-shaking insights into the mysterious matrix of time, space, and matter are being recognized by a year-long, worldwide celebration called the World Year of Physics 2005, or Year of Einstein, as it is known in Ireland, the United Kingdom, and Germany. The *Journal* joins the celebration by looking at the universe through a uniquely pragmatic, metaphysical/spiritual lens. And we ask the questions: What is reality? What is the true nature of the universe and our relationship to it? What is fact, and what is fiction?

ILLUSION: the state or fact of being intellectually deceived or misled: MISAPPREHENSION

© Michael Kenna. “Chess Board, Wimereux,” 2000.

Photographs.

We view symbolic rectangles all the time through the lens of a camera. Like Michael McKenna’s “Chess Board, Wimereux.”

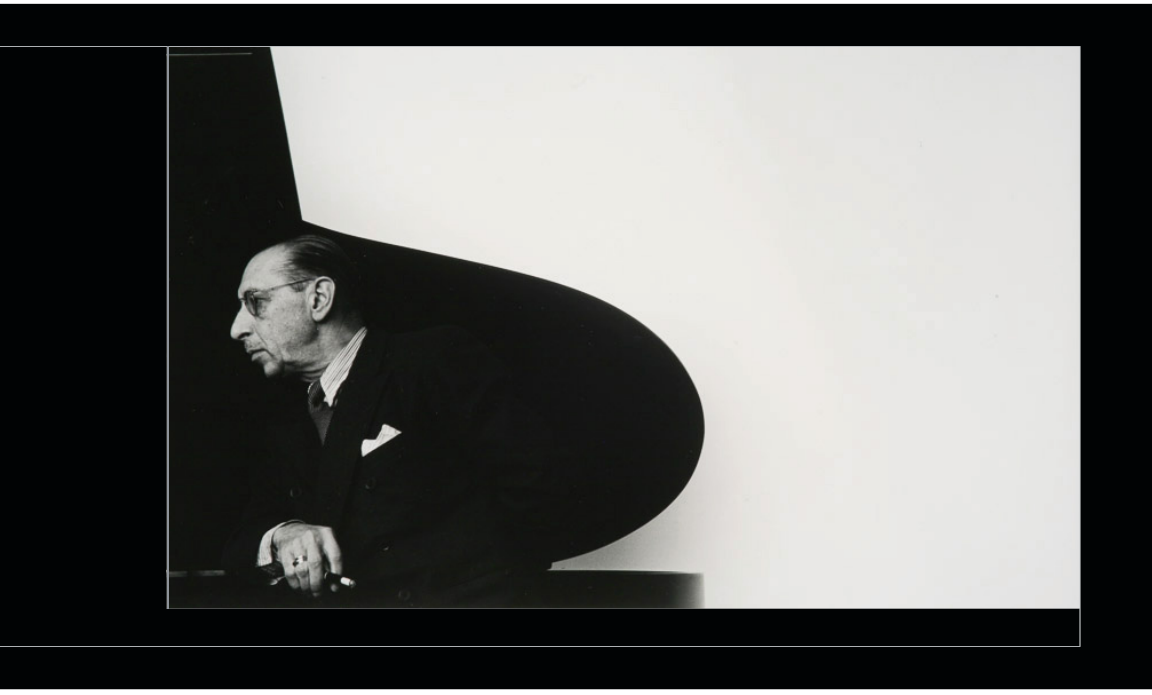
© Estate of Arnold Newman. Arnold Newman, "Igor Stravinsky," 1966.

Arnold Newman's photograph of composer Igor Stravinsky.

Talk about Significant Space!
Space that not only looks good, but also resonates,
like a seven-note chord played on that piano, with meaning.

Aesthetic Space. Symbolic Space.
Empty Space. Full Space.
Musical Space. Composed Space.

Played out within the taut boundaries of the artistic rectangle.
Simultaneously Aesthetic and Symbolic.



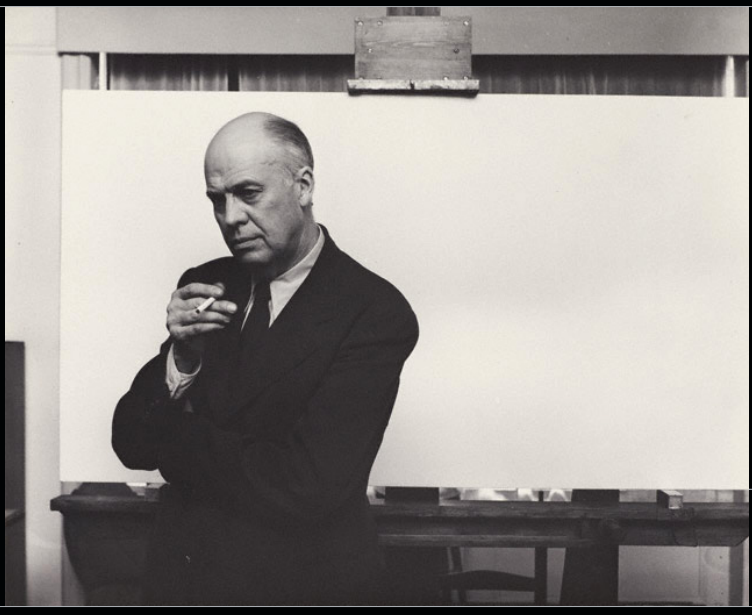
© Estate of Arnold Newman. Arnold Newman, "Edward Hopper," 1941.

The Symbolic Rectangle.

In more ways than one.
As Edward Hooper stands with relaxed precision in front of his blank canvas—blank rectangle—in another didactic photo by Arnold Newman.

Again.
Talk about Significant Space.
Simultaneously Abstract and Symbolic Space.

Paint Space!



Contemplative Space.

Figural Space. Figure|Field Space. Positive-Negative Space.
Space both Solid and Void.

A soft jigsaw design featuring two main puzzle pieces.
Interlocked. Mutually dependent. One creating the other.
A dialogue between the Fluid Figure of the Human Body
and the Fluid Figure of Significant Space . . .

A photograph oozing with simplicity and depth, both optical and psychological.
Feels like Newman & Hopper squeezed Move & Meaning out of a tube of paint.

© Svensk Filmindustri (SF). *The Seventh Seal*, 1957.

Or through the lens of a movie camera . . .
Like this still from Ingmar Bergman's *The Seventh Seal*.

The horizon line tilted within the frame to signify imbalance, trouble,
Death and Antonius Block, a disillusioned medieval knight,
choose sides for a high stakes chess game.

Death gets the black pieces.

In other words, one of the major generators of symbolic rectangles in modern culture are . . .

SS-13

Movies.

Movies pack all kinds of associational and emotional content into their widescreen aesthetic frame: content delivered at 24 frames per second. In fact, I coined the term The Symbolic Rectangle in commentary on the movie *Meru* that I posted on The International Movie Database.

I titled the commentary, “Base Camp | ‘The Symbolic Rectangle’” (www.imdb.com/user/ur1259009/reviews).

The term means something different in that context, but the concept of The Symbolic Rectangle—as it applies to both building architecture and

"Base Camp | The Symbolic Rectangle"

story architecture (movies)—has given me new eyes. I see the world more clearly. I see my work more clearly. I see more clearly what runs KHQ base camp.

Thanks to what David Emerald calls, in his book *The Power of TED**, a "Blinding Flash of the Obvious."

This photo isn't a still from the movie, but it does show the mountain that the movie is about: Meru. Meru is a mountain in the Himalayas in India. And Hindus believe that Meru is the center of the universe.

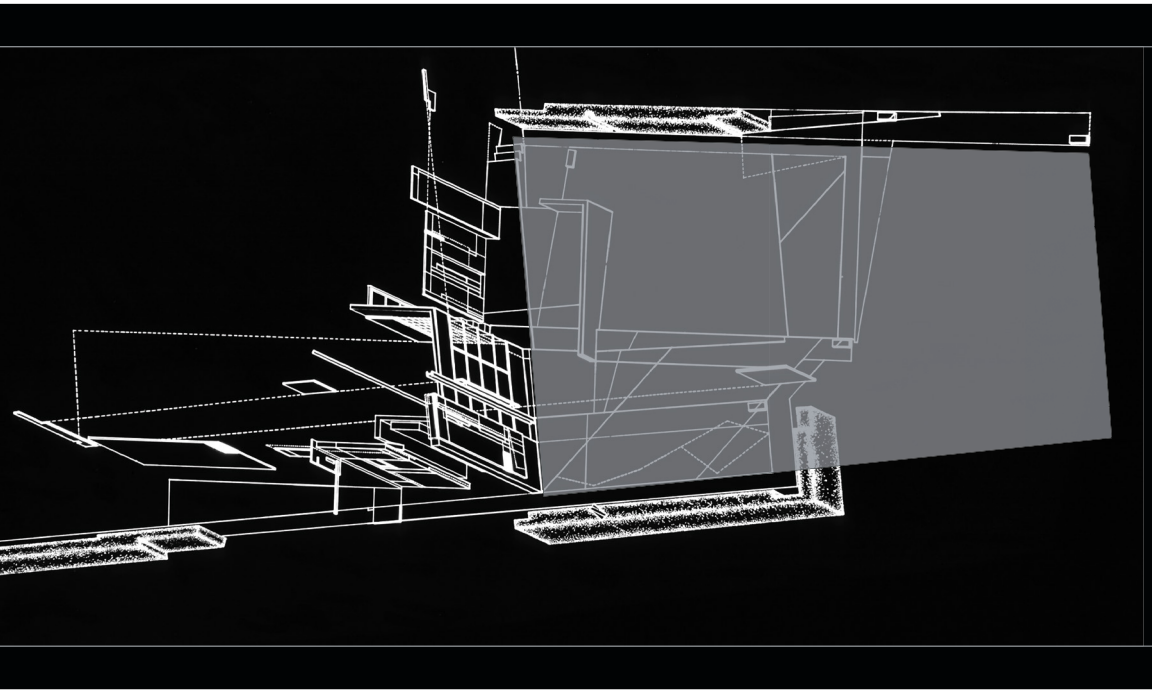
The Symbolic Rectangle is one of the controlling insights at the center of my universe.

⊘ Public Domain. "University of Virginia," 1856. Engraved by J. Serz. View to the north of Thomas Jefferson's *Academical Village*, which includes *The Lawn*, 1817. Photo via https://explore.lib.virginia.edu

At the University of Virginia, the center of the universe is an outdoor room.

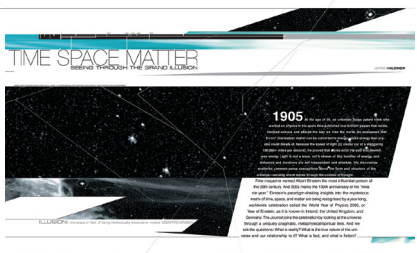
A Symbolic Rectangle of Significant Space, physically empty, but psychologically full, The Lawn symbolizes Paradise—the word *paradise* comes from Persian, meaning "walled garden."

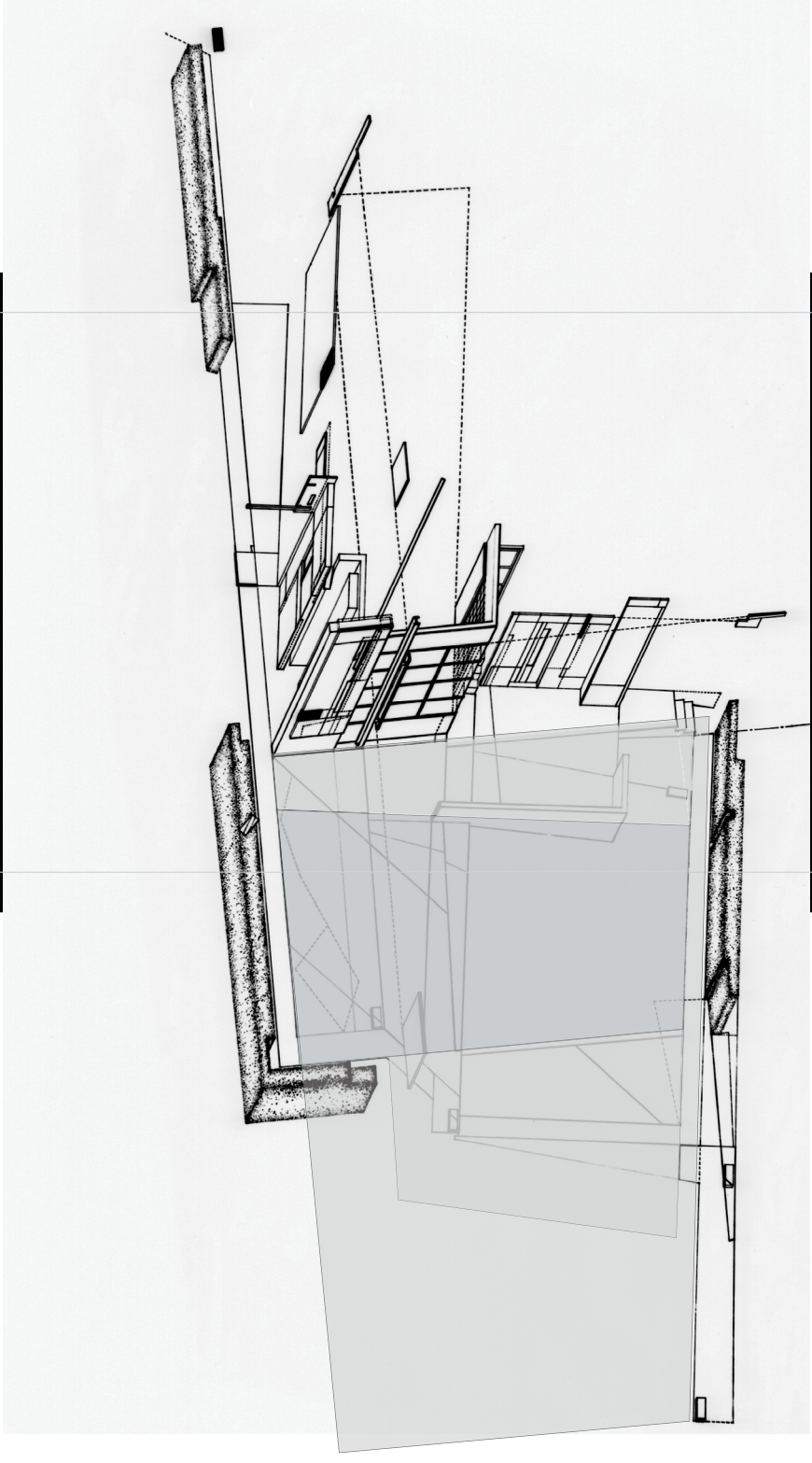
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA.



An outdoor rectangular room, subdivided, layered, torqued, cut, distorted fractured, perspectivally trapezoided (take a good look at the apparent shape at view of The Lawn on the previous page)—*defamiliarized*—via neo-Cubist devices, is the center of the universe of Dante|Telescope House.

Other examples of The Symbolic Rectangle?



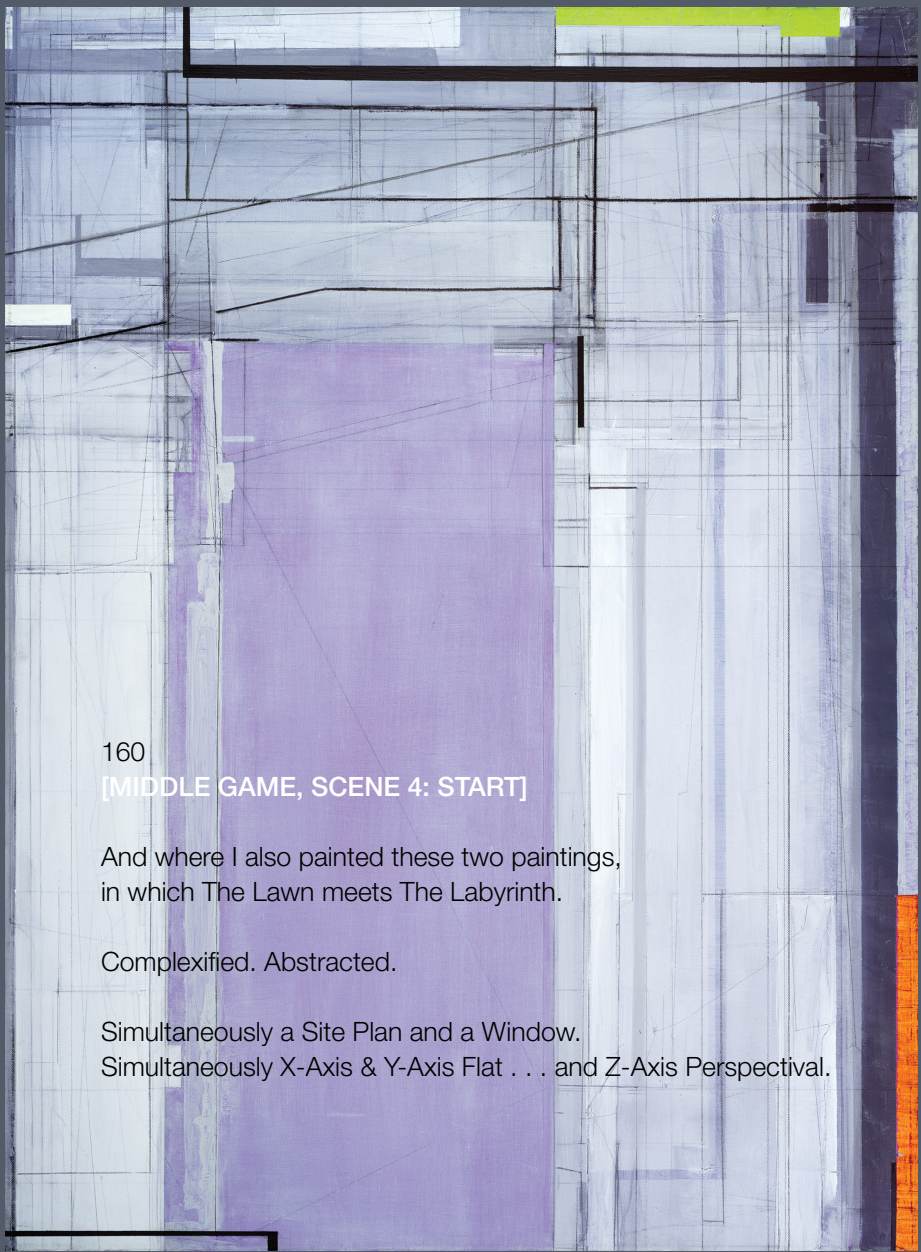


159

Paintings.

Like this one, *The Lawn*. Which I painted in my studio a stone's throw from Jefferson's Lawn.

THE LAWN, 1996. Oil, gouache, and pencil (grease, charcoal, graphite) on canvas. 11 x 14 in.
Private Collection, Sacramento, California



160
[MIDDLE GAME, SCENE 4: START]

And where I also painted these two paintings,
in which The Lawn meets The Labyrinth.

Complexified. Abstracted.

Simultaneously a Site Plan and a Window.
Simultaneously X-Axis & Y-Axis Flat . . . and Z-Axis Perspectival.

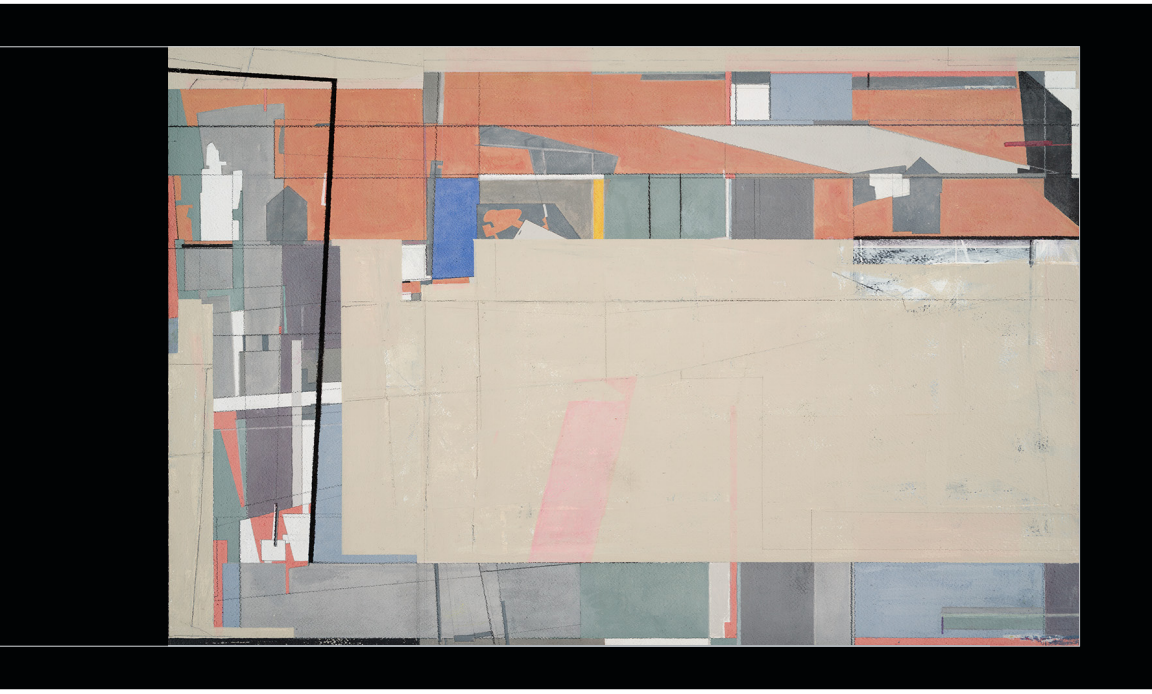
LABYRINTH ii : TOWER, MAZE, AND LAWN,1998. Oil on canvas in aluminum frame + pencil (grease, charcoal, graphite). 30 x 40 in. Private Collection, Boston, Massachusetts

LABYRINTH (AKA DAEDALUS), 1996. Acrylic on canvas in wood frame + pencil (grease, charcoal, graphite). 24 x 36 in. Private Collection, Williamstown, Massachusetts

SIGNIFICANT SPACE: Central Park, Manhattan, 1995.
Gouache and pencil (charcoal, graphite) on paper. 18 x 24 in.

The Lawn transposed to the City. Manhattan. Central Park.
The heart of the Urban Labyrinth.

The *Significant Space* at the heart of the Urban Labyrinth.



What you see here is a digital color remix of the original 24-by-36-inch oil on canvas. You can see the true color of the painting on pages 138 and 140. And you can see the painting in its custom aluminum frame together with all my paintings in *HENRY TRUCKS — Painter : ancient myths meet modern landscapes | 1995–2010*.

The Lawn & The Labyrinth and the Site Plan & Window meet the Knight—in a painting I title *Daedalus*.

At one point, I titled the painting, *Aeneas*, a reference to Virgil's *Aeneid*, the epic poem about the founder of Rome, the demigod, son of the mortal Anchises and the immortal Venus. Actually, I first titled the painting, *Self-Portrait*. And I still view the painting as having all three titles, reflecting my search for identity, I suppose, right? My identity crisis?

Am I Aeneas, star-crossed lover of Dido, queen of Carthage? Well, I was doomed with Laura, my Dido, to the same cruel fate—finally getting together 32 years after we met. And workwise, I seek to find my Rome.

But on the other hand . . .

Am I Deadalus, architect-inventor of the labyrinth? In which he himself ended up imprisoned, needing to summon the creativity required for escape, inventing wings to set himself and his son, Icarus, free? Physically and psychologically.

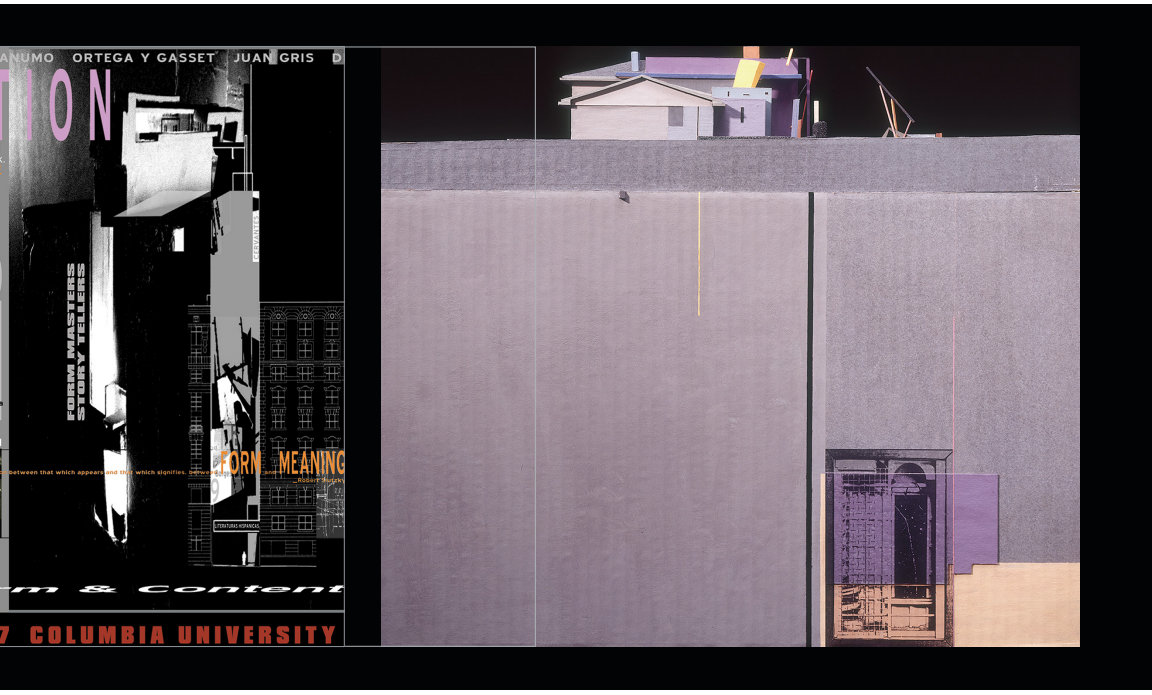
Which archetypal man is more me? Which universal story relates more to my work? The epic story of Aeneas or Daedalus?

Well, both, but I settled on *Daedalus* as the main title of this painting, because Daedalus is an architect, the architect of the labyrinth, simultaneously a physical and metaphorical construct—and my obsession, because life is a labyrinth . . . through which we all journey, meeting adversity, facing darkness and fear, hoping that what proved true for both Aeneas and Daedalus proves true for us: as Virgil writes in the *Aeneid*, "Your road to safety will open first from where you least expect it."

163

The Symbolic Rectangle appears in lots of other archetypal forms . . .

Drawings and Models.


ANUMO ORTEGA Y GASSET JUAN GRIS D
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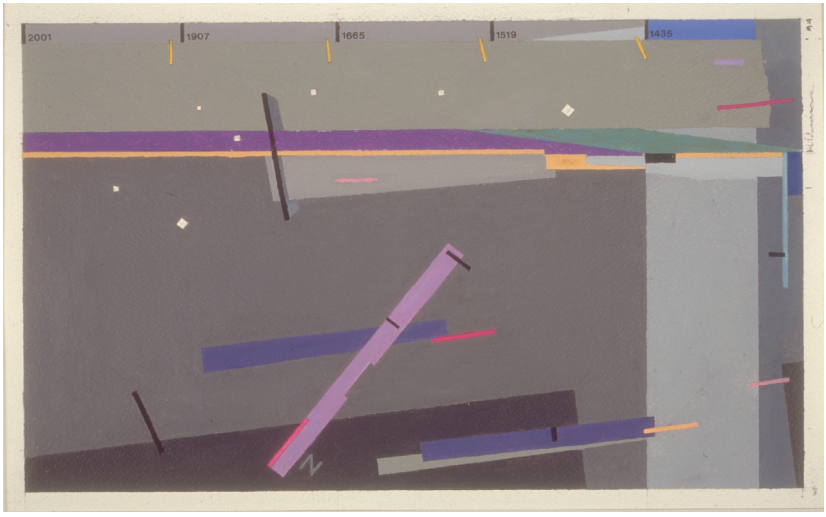
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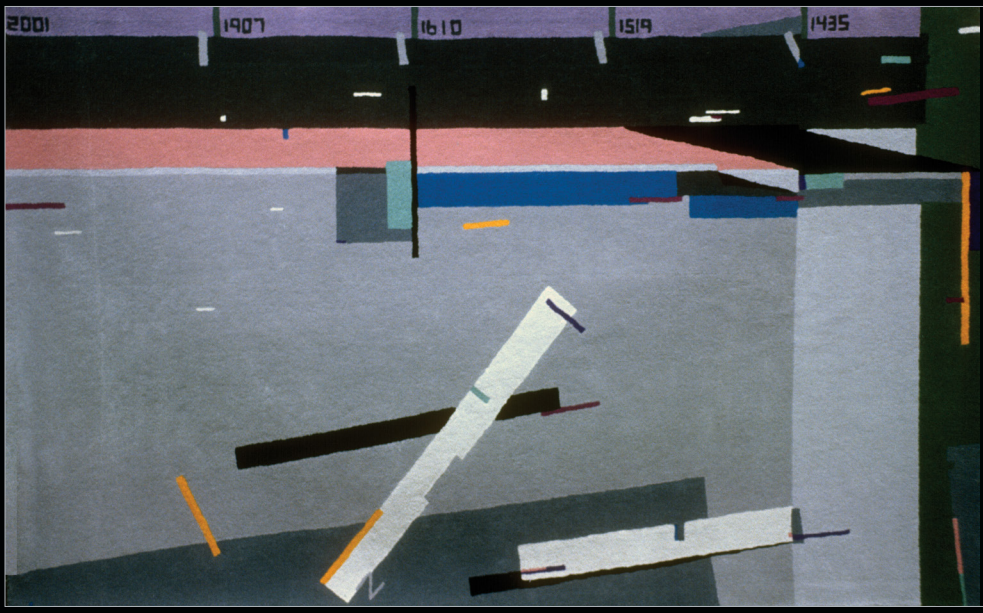
1519
1435



Textiles and Glass.

The Symbolic Rectangle in the form of the 6-by-9-foot North Star Telescope Rug [above] in Dante|Telescope House orients you to True North by its position on the living room floor. Important dates in the history of science and art meter the rug along the top. An 11-by-80-inch vertical panel of sandblasted glass flanks the entrance door. The section at eye level [opposite page] shows an abstracted floor plan of the house's southwest corner, featuring the cut-figure of the Dante|Telescope Monolith (including the negative cut for the North pointing steel beam "telescope" that slices through it) and other syntactic/semantic elements, like the steel blade and wide flange column, which support nothing but an idea.

Also—a quote in Italian from Dante's *Divine Comedy*:

IO NON SO BEN RIFIR COM'I' V'ENTRAI.
"**I do not yet know how I entered**."

A deep, implicit plea for orientation in the world, physically and metaphysically, to which Dante|Telescope House seeks to give creative expression.

A second panel of sandblasted glass appears at the back door. I did full-size drawings for all glass panels and rugs, including the 3-by-18-foot runner, a very thin and long Symbolic Rectangle.

Web pages.

Online syllabus for my UTA graduate theory seminar on film architecture, or what I call Cinematecture.

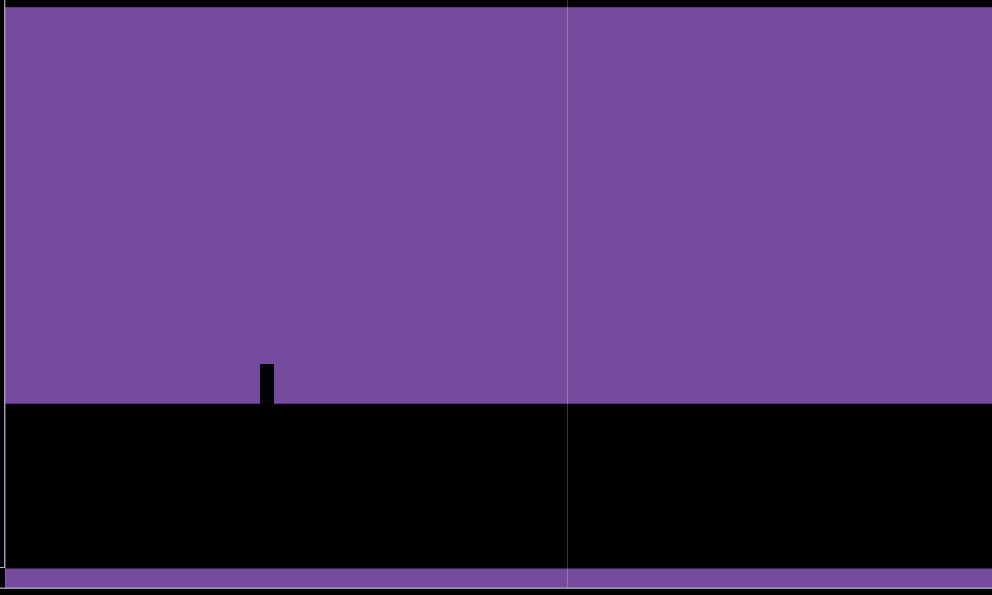
Cinema + Architecture.

T PAINTER

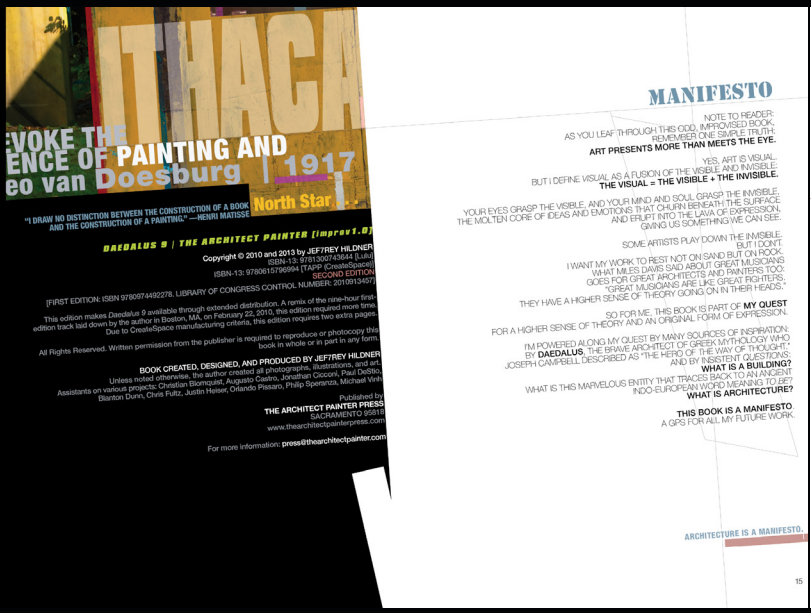
intellectual as well as material foundations. _Colin Rowe

JEF7REY HILDNER | THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON Graduate Theory Seminar: Spring 2002 [see related Fall 2001

Now and forever the architect is going to replace the set designer.
THE MOVIES WILL BE THE FAITHFUL TRANSLATOR OF THE ARCHITECT'S BOLDEST DREAMS.
| Luis Buñuel (1927)



THE DAEDALUS PROJECT
2023
THE ARCHITECT PAINTER JEF7REY HILDNER PRESENTS A CINEMATIC FUSION OF FORM & STORY: ARCHITECTURE IS THE STAGE SET FOR THE DRAMA OF LIFE . . .
ARCHITECTURE IS A STORY TOLD THROUGH A BUILDING. ENTER SITE >



167

Book pages.

Like these in my book *Daedalus 9* and in Peter Waldman's book *Connective Tissue*, for which I wrote the Epilogue: "LABYRINTH R.U.N."

T H
R . U . N .
eath." —Michelangelo A. Roland Slate
THE ANCIENT GREEKS DIDN'T FEAR DEATH.
BUT THEY DID FEAR THE ONE THING THAT DOOMS US TO A FATE WORSE THAN DEATH.
AND THEY KNEW THAT EVEN IF WE SUMMON ALL OF OUR RESOURCES TO HEAD OFF THAT FATE AT THE GUARDIAN GATE, VICTORY DOESN'T REST ENTIRELY, IF VERY MUCH AT ALL, IN OUR POWER.
AND POWER MIGHT PROVE LESS IMPORTANT THAN LUCK.
THE ANCIENT GREEKS KNEW THAT TO SLAY THE MINOTAUR, THE TERRIFYING MONSTER THAT PROWLS THE LABYRINTH— WE MUST ENLIST THE HELP OF A SUPERNATURAL AIDE.
A GOD.
DAEDALUS
D N E R
AS. 62 X 93 IN.

Medium format 4 x 5 photography pp. 476–483: William Taylor and John Wysocki, directed by JEF7REY HILDNER

And like this Symbolic Rectangle, a film strip for a chapter in *The Daedalus Project* that features two of the buildings I did for Tenacre Foundation in Princeton, NJ (1982–1989): a Library and Residence Hall called The Center (left photo) and an employees' Cafeteria and Garden, my very first built project, code name *Paradise*.

The chapter's subtitle, "Origins of a Quest: Owls and Pineapples," sets up the story I plan to tell of how the seeds of my quest for a Move & Meaning architecture—for a Significant Architecture—were planted early on . . . a story I haven't yet told, through work I haven't yet shown in any of my books, about how I came to trade in both sides of the Silver Coin of Art: the White Knight of Aesthetics and the Black Knight of Symbolics.

And how could I foresee . . .

First, Owls and Pineapples.

Then Knights.

Owls of wisdom and pineapples of hospitality led me eventually to the symbol of my true identity: the Silver Knight of Form & Story.

Paradise

The Center: Library and Residence Hall

OWL OF WISDOM. The Center, Tenacre Foundation, 1985–1989. One of four owls, symbols of paranormal wisdom, that guard the cross-axis corners of the Library—as they guarded the goddess of wisdom, Athena, at the Acropolis, their 360-surveillance protecting Athena's blind side. The Library interior (opposite page) features The Architect Painter's custom wall lanterns, seven-sided ceiling pendants, and furniture crafted from ebony ash, copper, and mother-of-pearl called the "Emily Line."

169

Book covers.

Another major form of cultural expression where the Black Knight of Meaning plays a role at least equal to the White Knight of Moves.

We expect book covers to showcase a delicate balance of costars:
The Aesthetic Rectangle & The Symbolic Rectangle.

REMEMBERING THE MATHEMATICS OF THE IDEAL VILLA: AN ESSAY ON LE CORBUSIER'S 1927 VILLA DE MONZIE/STEIN
GARCHES 1234
JEFFREY HILDNER

ARCHITECT, PAINTER, AND WRITER

JEF7REY HILDNER

launched The Architect Painter Press in 2005 under the banner, "Live Brave."

The Architect Painter Press presents Hildner's buildings, paintings, and insights—work that reflects his focus on the visible and invisible structures of life and art. The Architect Painter Press also seeks to present the work of other artists. Current publications include Hildner's pamphlet, *Picasso Lessons*, to his books *Daedalus & Garches 1234*, *Henry Trocke — Painter*, and *Metropolis*. Special and Visual Effects. His work also appears in a wide array of other venues—for example, Architectural Education, Arq, Oz, The Christian Science Monitor, IMDb, and Global Architecture Magazine. The book Architectural Formalism, by Hakan Anaç, features Hildner's essay "Formalism: Mathematics" alongside essays by theorists Rosalind Krauss, Peggy Deamer, Robert Slutzky, and Colin Rowe. Hildner received the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture award for excellence in teaching. His project "Garches: A Modern House and Its Now Jersey Chapter of The American Institute of Architects "Blue Ribbon Award for Excellence in Design." Hildner's drawings are in the names Madison Gray and Eliot Plum. He paints under the name Henry Trocke. Before he became a full-time architect—whose his quest, his outputs, and his output, including his work as scholar, artist, and writer—Hildner received his undergraduate and graduate degrees from Princeton University.

IN 1927, THE GREAT SWISS-FRENCH ARCHITECT LE CORBUSIER completed a house in the Paris suburb of **Garches.**

The house has become an icon of modern architecture.

Other major architectural events took place that year: Konstantin Melnikov built his cylinder house in Moscow; Alvar Aalto won the competition for the design of the Viipuri Library in Vyborg, Russia; Pierre Chareau began work on the Maison de Verre in Paris; and sixteen leading architects of the modern movement, including Le Corbusier, showcased projects for working-class housing at the Weissenhof exhibition in Stuttgart. And in the new medium of cinema, 1927 featured Fritz Lang's landmark film *Metropolis*—stunning audiences with visions of how buildings in the future could look.

But no structure of the early modernist era has gained more renown than Le Corbusier's VILLA DE MONZIE/STEIN at Garches. In 1947, British scholar COLIN ROWE'S essay "The Mathematics of the Ideal Villa" brought Garches to the foreground. And Garches—as architects refer to the house—has stayed there ever since.

ARCHITECT JEF7REY HILDNER revisits the mathematics of the ideal villa. He uncovers Rowe's oversights and sweeps away the mythologies about Garches that Rowe's essay generated. In addition, Hildner's analysis and drawings reveal new aspects of Le Corbusier's work that have remained hidden until now.

GARCHES 1234 **picks up where Rowe's essay left off and throws bold light on Le Corbusier's assertion that at Garches, more than any of his other projects, "proportion ruled absolutely there, as absolute mistress."**

HILDNER published an early version of this essay in the refereed *Journal of Architectural Education*. Here the essay appears in its final and fully illustrated

FORM.

ISBN 978-0-9987030-4-0
FIFTH EDITION

CONTROL AND SOUL LIVE BRAVE

GARCHES 1234

JEF HEY HILDNER THE ARCHITECT PAINTER PRESS

REMEMBERING THE MATH

GAR

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THE ARCHITECT PAINTER PRESS
COMPOSITION IS A GAME, AND A GAME HAS RULES.
REMEMBERING THE MATHEMATICS OF THE IDEAL VILLA: AN ESSAY ON LE CORBUSIER'S 1927 VILLA DE MONZIE/STEIN
GARCHES 1234
JEF REY HILDNER

1987
PICASSO TESSONS
THE SIXTH WOMAN OF LES DEMOISELLES D'AVIGNON
JEFFREY HILDNER

2007 marked the 100th anniversary of Pablo Picasso's painting LES DEMOISELLES D'AVIGNON.
The Demoiselles triggered the invention of Cubism —and ignited an artistic revolution.
Form broke free.
Abstraction erupted.
In this short essay, The Architect Painter JEFFREY HILDNER revisits Picasso's landmark canvas, X-rays its organizing principles, and discovers new
. . . PICASSO LESSONS.
1907
PICASSO LESSONS
THE SIXTH WOMAN OF LES DEMOISELLES D'AVIGNON
JEFFREY HILDNER
THE ARCHITECT PAINTER PRESS
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

METAPHYSICAL
WARRIOR
JEFFREY HILDNER
MEDITATIONS ON THE
ART & SCIENCE OF LIFE

LIVE BRAVE.

ILLUMINAT ON

JEFFREY HILDNER is an architect, a painter, and a writer. In *METAPHYSICAL WARRIOR*, he draws on his perspective as an artist and a spiritual explorer to survey the blueprint of reality, revealing deeply personal insights that light his path through life.

METAPHYSICAL WARRIOR looks less like a finished painting and more like an exuberantly primed canvas, but pay attention: This brave offbeat book might wake you up, move you forward, and set you free.

I coexist with and express Life as a sunbeam coexists with and expresses the sun. And so do you.

METAPHYSICAL WARRIOR

THE ARCHITECT PAINTER PRESS
ISBN 978-0-9987030-2-2
9 780998 703022 90000

JEFFREY HILDNER

METAPHYSICAL WARRIOR

METAPHYSICAL WARRIOR

WHAT IS YOUR DEEPEST DESIRE?

I want to Live Brave—
and thread my way through the labyrinth
of life
with intuition, empathy, heart, and zest,
facing adversity as its master
and fulfilling my quest,
hoping my life-story adds up to a creative
demonstration of Truth . . .
before I rest.

JEFFREY HILDNER

MEDITATIONS ON THE ART & SCIENCE OF LIFE

KHQ

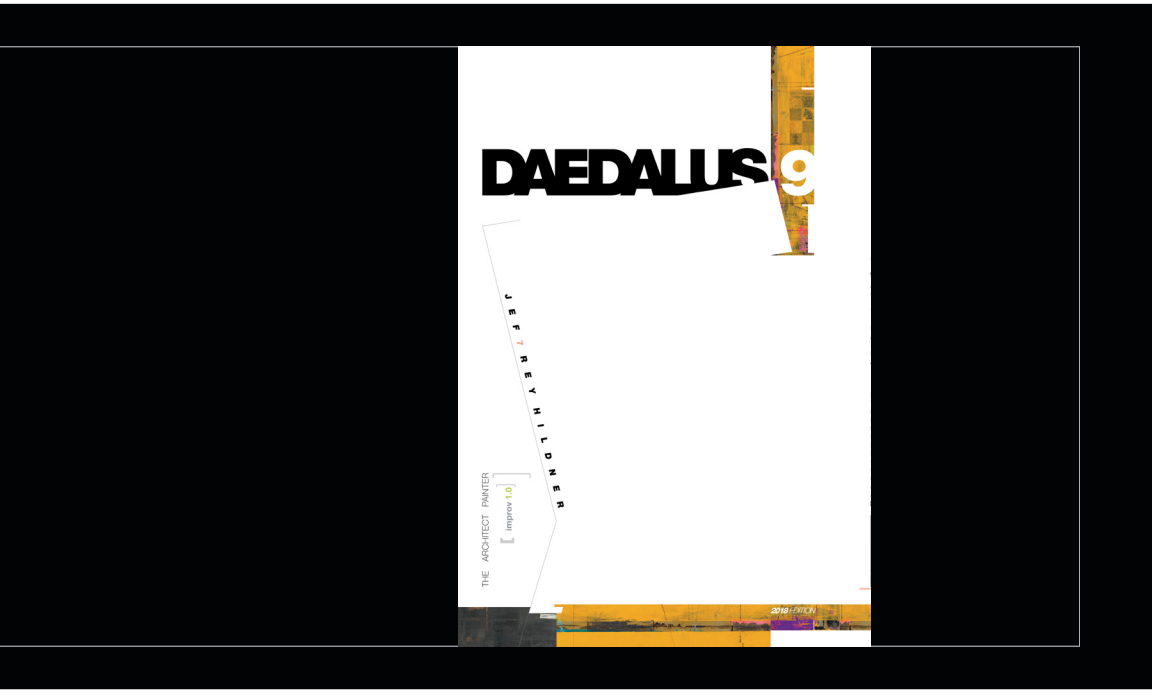
175

Take the cover of my book *Daedalus 9*.

A cover that asserts the controlling device—the primary chess move—of the figural void. I treated the solid elements of the composition less as space occupiers and more as space definers, creating an Occupied Edge that defines an Empty Center.

Empty Space. *Significant Space*.

Significant Space in the form of an angled Lawn-like game board—a negative-space battleground—for the invisible but psychologically tangible chess game between Move & Meaning.



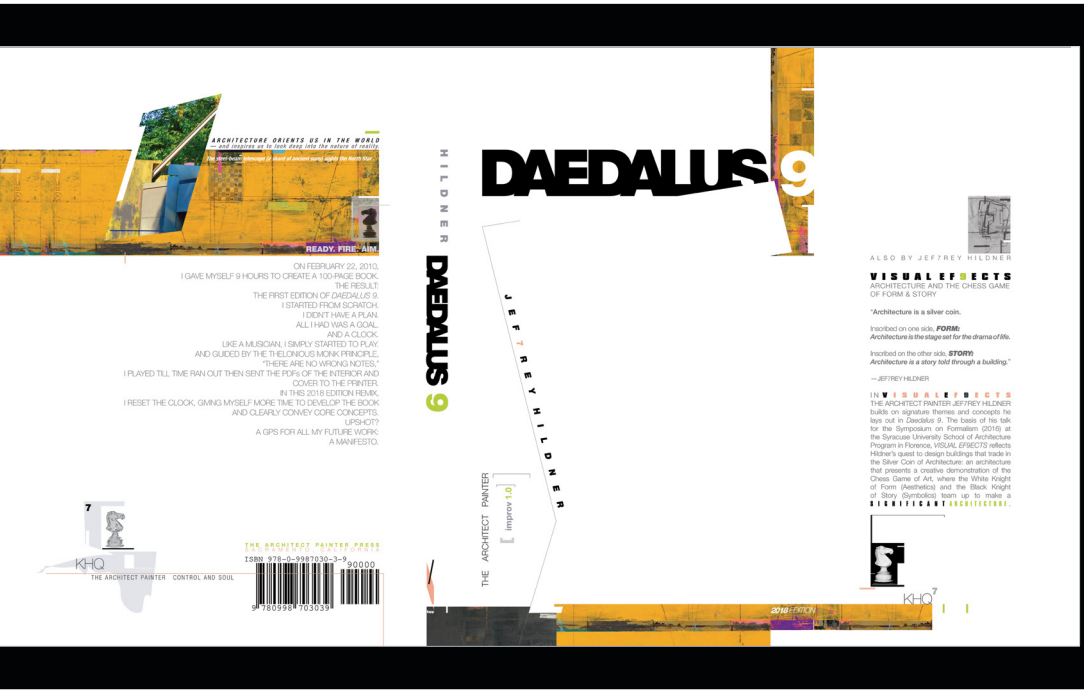
The White Knight plays creative director of The Aesthetic Rectangle.
The Black Knight plays creative director of The Symbolic Rectangle.

So, which Knight rules?

The great Russian filmmaker Sergei Eisenstein said that "the basis of every art is conflict."

And I treat the cover of every book as the arena for conflict. The front cover, the back cover, the spine, the front flap, and the back flap—these five pieces have to stand on their own and also work with the other four pieces as an ensemble, as one coordinated arena for conflict.

Each of the five pieces of a dust jacket is a painting. And you can't deny the primacy of the front cover, but I think of the unfolded, full-width dust jacket as the most important painting. Here's how I view the dust jacket of every book, not just my books.



The dust jacket of a book is a painting: a wide-screen painting of a Silver Knight Landscape, where the White Army of Aesthetics and the Black Army of Symbolics battle for supremacy on the horizontal chessboard of art.

For example, on the dust jacket of *Daedalus 9*, which Army rules? Which Knight—the mascot of the two armies—comes out on top?

To what degree, through the harmony and dissonance of their interplay, have White and Black sides achieved equilibrium? Pleasing balance or imbalance?

To what degree does it strike us that the overlapping Aesthetic Rectangle and Symbolic Rectangle engage, as in a chess game, in conscious calculated conflict?

Collaborative conflict.

(I repeat the back flap and back cover on this page and on the pages of covers that follow, because a crucial part of the back cover gets lost in the gutter between the two facing pages.)

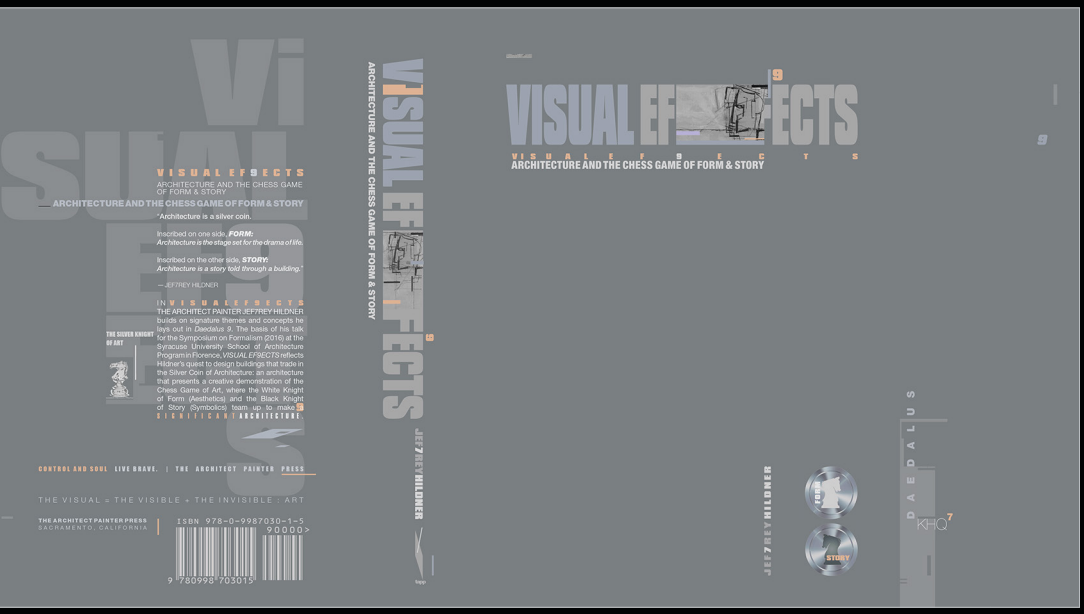
177 **SHOW & TELL**

Most buildings today simply show. I want my buildings to also tell.

Early design for the dust jacket of *Visual Ef9ects*. As pleasing as I still find this cover—Control and Soul, clear invisible rectangles and spacemaking, more empty than full. But more wrong than right. More about the polished Silver Coin of Art than the messy Chess Game. (The back cover display quote? "Architecture is a Silver Coin.") More about pretty harmony than gritty conflict. More about peace than the War of Art.

"Murder your darlings," said English writer Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch. Do what a pro does: throw away 93% of what you do to find the 7% you're capable of chiseling from the gold mine of art. Attached only to the truth. Which boils down to, "Does the headline, as we call a title in the magazine industry, go with the picture?"

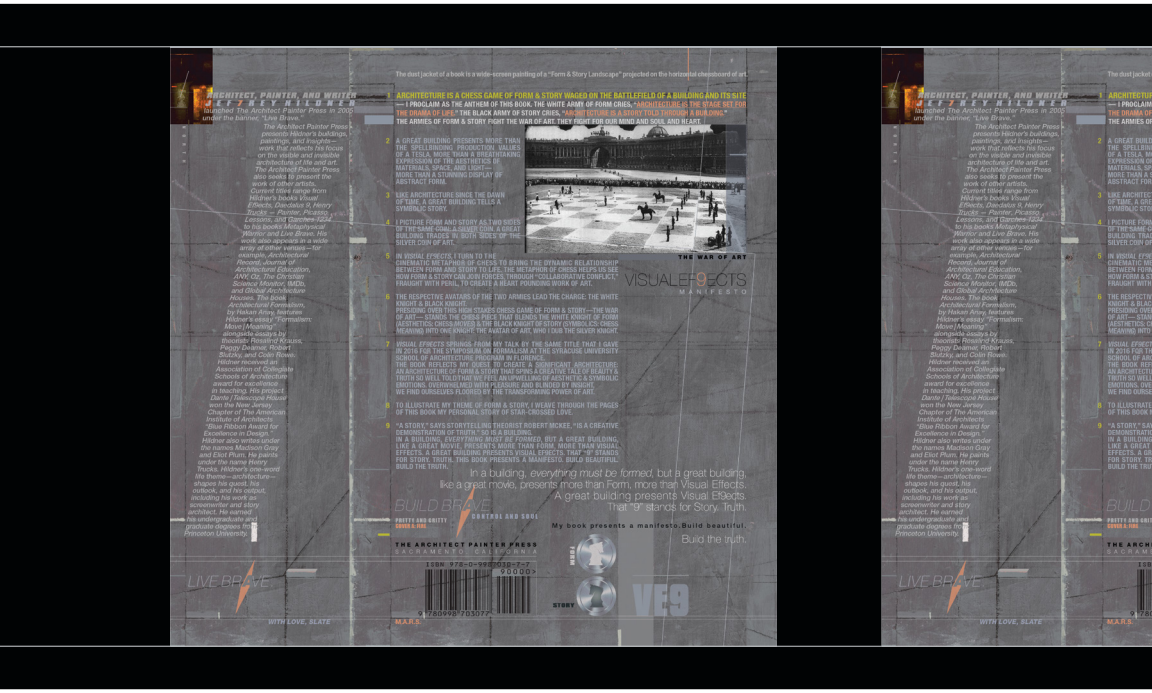
I wrote headlines and chose photos and artwork for both my own articles and countless other writers' articles for over nine years as senior writer and senior editor for two international magazines. For seven of those years, I was also the magazines' creative director. We put out five magazines a month, and I had the last say on how every cover and page looked. I designed over 100 magazine covers and coached my art staff to nail the design of some 350 more. I knew the questions to ask. *Does the picture fit the words? Does what you see go with what you read?*



It better. Or you've gone up to the plate and whiffed, and you'll lose your audience. But if you nail it, if the headline and the picture, the verbal and the visual, go together like, well, fill in the blank, then you've hit a home run, and your audience will cheer for you without even knowing they're cheering. Because they'll feel it. They'll feel the unity of the pictures and the words: the unity of Form & Story. What something looks like and how it reads. What it shows and what it tells.

Somehow, even with all of my experience as a magazine architect, when it came to the cover of *Visual Ef9ects*, after already having worked on it more hours than you would believe, I was blind. Until that blessed dumbstruck moment. *The subtile isn't Architecture and the Silver Coin of Form & Story, you idiot. It's Architecture and the Chess Game of Form & Story. You've designed a Hollywood movie poster for* Top Gun *giving top billing to Val Kilmer (Iceman) not Tom Cruise (Maverick)!!!* When the smoke of battle cleared, I could see that my personal war of art had only just begun.

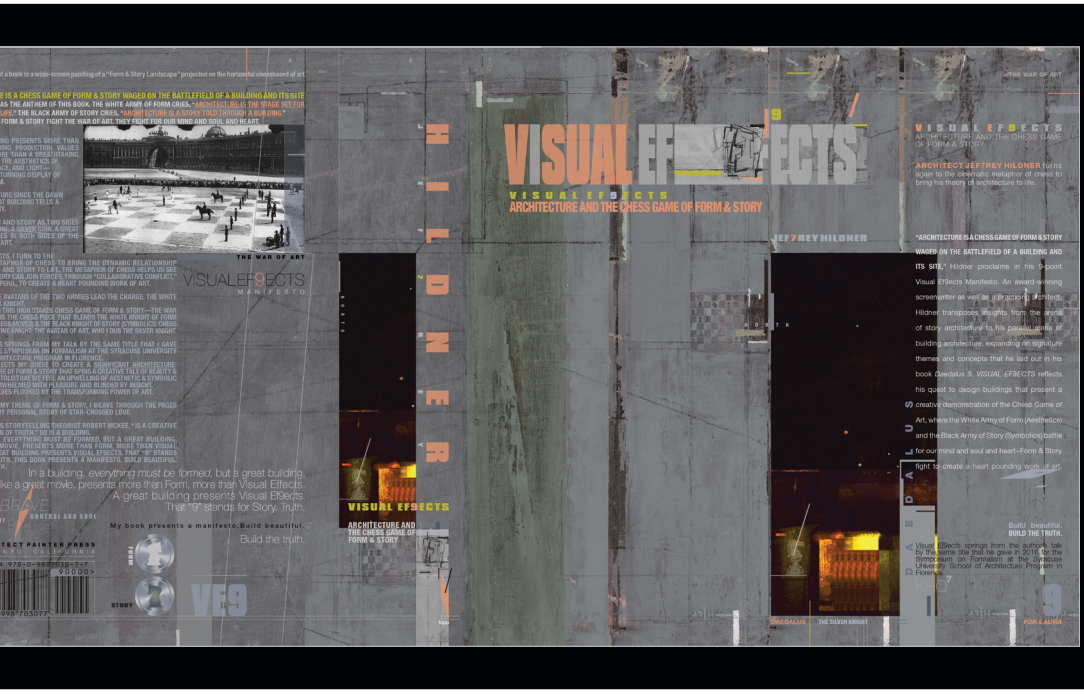
By the way, when I say "the war of art" with respect to the artist—as opposed to the war of art transpiring within the art itself, the way I use the phrase in this book—



I have in mind Steven Pressfield's book, *The War of Art: Break Through the Blocks and Win Your Inner Creative Battles*, which has helped me immeasurably, reminding me to stick with it, stay true to the work no matter what, fight through every frickin' form of inner and outer Resistance.

The cover of this book emerged from the battlefield of design. I waged a personal war of art that swung me between ecstasy and pain. But I fought my way to two covers that no longer feature the best friend (Silver Coin) in the lead role and the hero (Chess) in the supporting role.

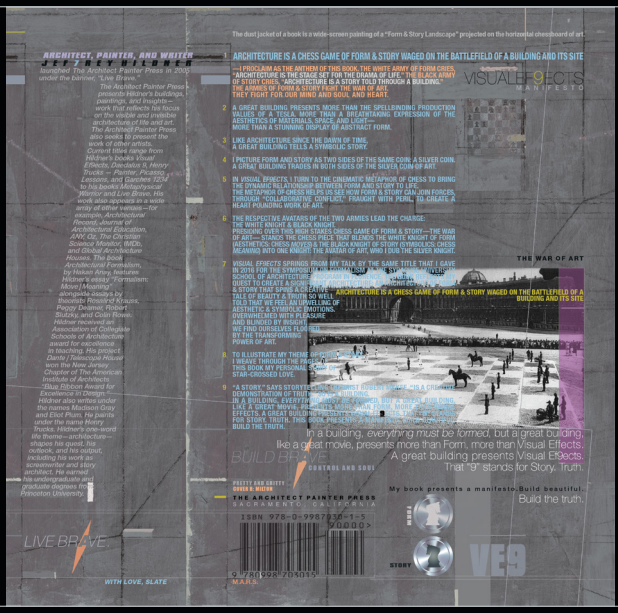
Pretty and Gritty: Cover A—"Fire" | Early design



Do you see a Silver Knight Landscape of Form & Story? Move & Meaning? Do you see an Abstract Aesthetic System and a Symbolic Image System? Do you see the collaborative conflict—the dynamic balance and tension-filled struggle—between The Aesthetic Rectangle and The Symbolic Rectangle? Expressed through composition and color? Layout, image, text, form and space? Do you see a fight and fit between the mind of the draftsman and the soul of a musician? The universal icon of the chessboard versus the personal whimsy of my artwork? I use my chessboard painting *Ithaca* (color-shifted) as the background. On the front cover, I use a vertical slice from my *Daedalus* series: We see a Silver Knight and a Night Sky. The knight looks through their telescope-sword to the North star, hoping to find the next safe moves through the fiery labyrinth on the chessboard of life.

Do you sense the battle between the army of Form and the army of Story?
As they fight for our mind and soul and heart in the War of Art?

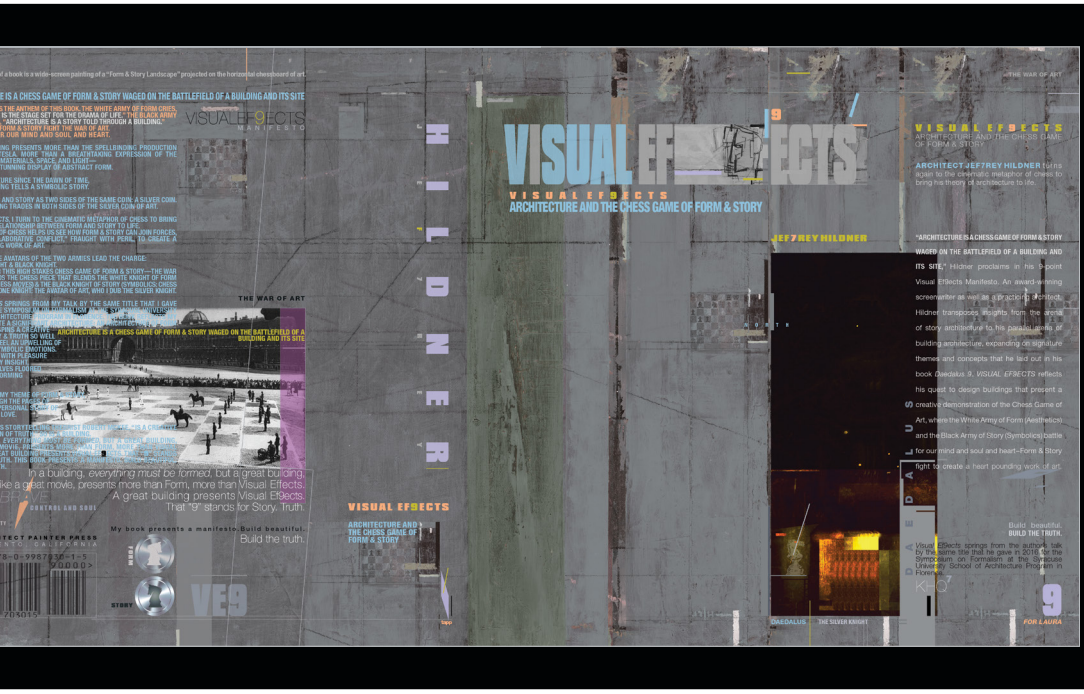
I hope so.



Pretty and Gritty: Cover B—"Milton" | Early design

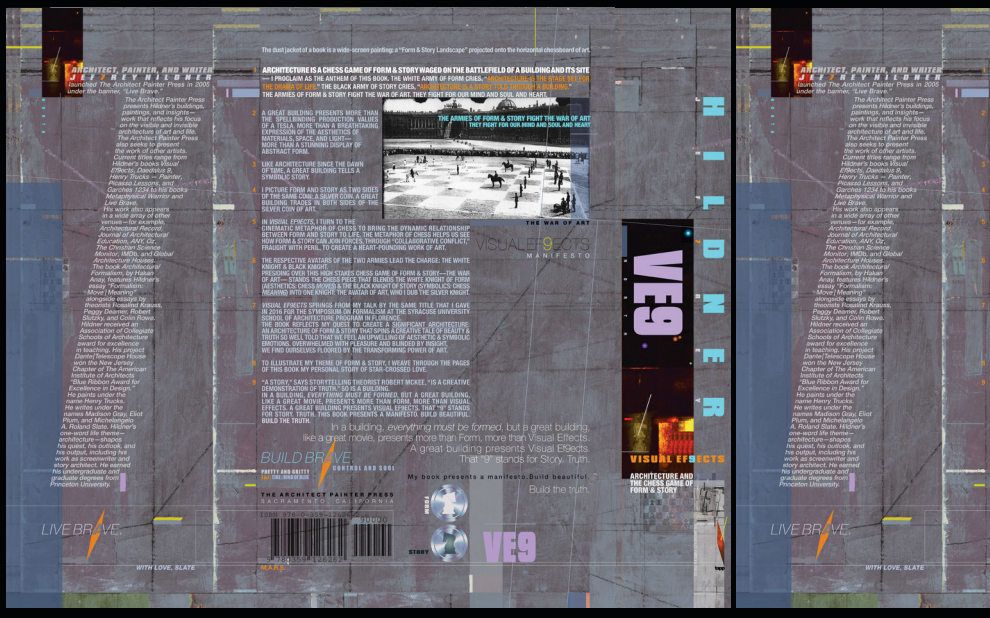
I named it after Milton Avery, one of my favorite painters who I turn to for inspiration about color harmony and color courage. Avery, in the tradition of 20th-century semi-abstract painting, changed the colors of the outer world to make them line up with his inner vision. I thought of Avery all the time as I dared to fight the familiar way (chess = white & black and "serious," gritty) and do the cover the *defamiliar* way. The artistic way.

I did Cover B before Cover A. But I backed down. I despaired that the symbolic meaning of the colors that I dipped my brush in didn't make sense. What's with the blue title and subtitle? The salmon and lavender?



Do those colors fit the symbolic spirit of a book about the battlefield of art? Do those colors really go with my Silver Knight/Night Sky artwork on the front cover? I was bummed. So much work, so little trust that it hung together optically and made sense. So much joy crushed by fear. Inner Resistance. I guess I had to abandon Cover Pretty and do Cover Gritty before I could rage, *So what if the colors "don't work"? So what if the color melody and chords strike people as off key? So WHAT! Isn't that a GOOD thing? Chromatic Conflict? Isn't it true blue to your theme, the War of Art???*

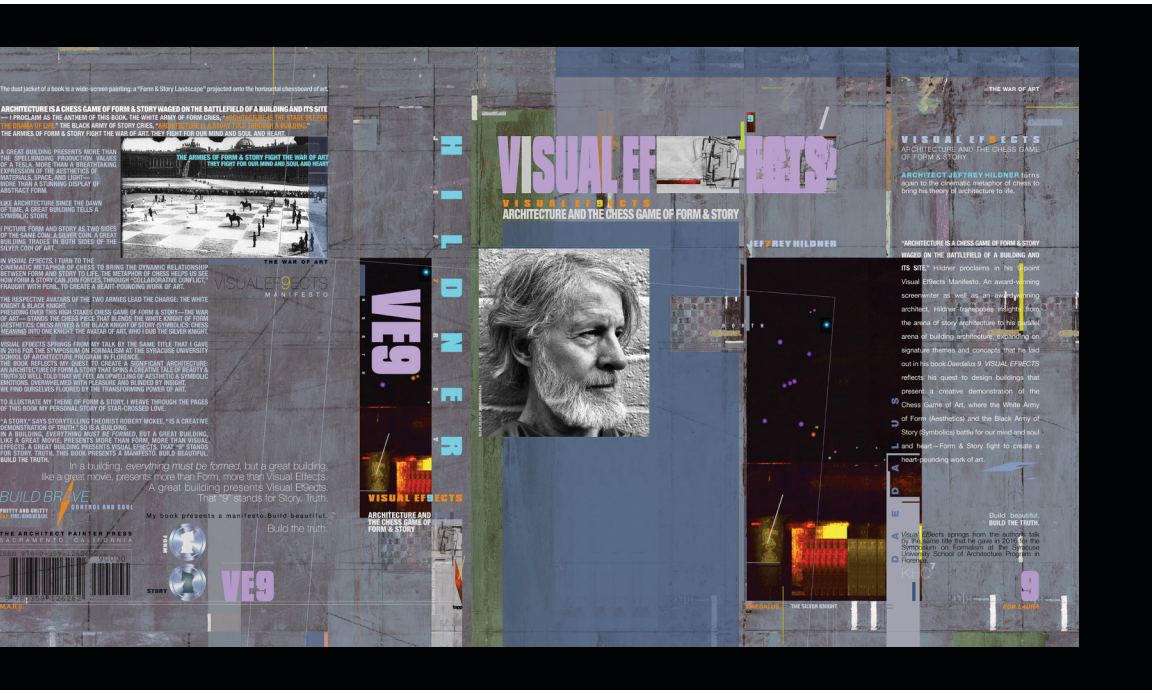
I heard Milton Avery say go for it. Georges Braque too. I heard my muse and lost love, Laura Middleton, encourage me, "Don't be afraid. Color Brave. Why not use both covers? And also a third cover—Cover C: 'Kind of Blue.' Our cover." Each cover falls along the spectrum that runs from Pretty to Gritty and Cold to Hot. Three dust jacket landscape paintings—Aesthetic & Symbolic Rectangles that seek to present a creative demonstration of the ideas I lay out in this treatise: three expressions of *Visual Ef9ects*.



180

Pretty and Gritty: Cover C—"Kind of Blue" | Color

I named it after the classic 1959 jazz record by Miles Davis, one of Laura and my favorites. This cover's title conveys how I feel. And like Cover B, this cover looks and feels like us, Laura & me: Turf & Surf, Fire & Ice. Cover A foregrounds Laura's warmth. Cover C rebalances the temperature, tipping the scales toward my coolth, yet still reflecting the unity and harmony of our opposite Color IDs. Mine? Gritty: blue—cool grays, silver, the sea. In a word: Slate. Laura's? Pretty: orange—golden rays, copper, Roland-Garros clay. In a word: Terra-cotta. Perfect with her Color Me Beautiful fall palette: peach-toned complexion, brown hair, and crossover-color ocean blue eyes. My eyes are kind of blue. Laura's are true blue.



Slowly, over a period of years, I managed to bring the cover to life . . .

180a

Pretty and Gritty: Cover C—"Kind of Blue" | Black & White

The dust jacket of a book is a wide-screen painting: a "Form & Story Landscape" projected onto the horizontal chessboard of art.
ARCHITECTURE IS A CHESS GAME OF FORM & STORY WAGED ON THE BATTLEFIELD OF A BUILDING AND ITS SITE
—I PROCLAIM AS THE ANTHEM OF THIS BOOK. THE WHITE ARMY OF FORM CRIES, "ARCHITECTURE IS THE STAGE SET FOR THE DRAMA OF LIFE." THE BLACK ARMY OF STORY CRIES, "ARCHITECTURE IS A STORY TOLD THROUGH A BUILDING."
THE ARMIES OF FORM & STORY FIGHT THE WAR OF ART. THEY FIGHT FOR OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART.
A GREAT BUILDING PRESENTS MORE THAN THE SPELLBINDING PRODUCTION VALUES OF A TESLA. MORE THAN A BREATHTAKING EXPRESSION OF THE ARCHITECTS OF MATERIALS, SPACE, AND LIGHT—MORE THAN A STUNNING DISPLAY OF ABSTRACT FORM.
LIKE ARCHITECTURE SINCE THE DAWN OF TIME, A GREAT BUILDING TELLS A SYMBOLIC STORY.
I PICTURE FORM AND STORY AS TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN. A SILVER COIN. A GREAT BUILDING TRADES IN BOTH SIDES OF THE SILVER COIN OF ART.
THE ARMIES OF FORM & STORY FIGHT THE WAR OF ART
THEY FIGHT FOR OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART
THE WAR OF ART
IN VISUAL EFFECTS, I TURN TO THE CINEMATIC METAPHOR OF CHESS TO BRING THE DYNAMIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FORM AND STORY TO LIFE. THE METAPHOR OF CHESS HELPS US SEE HOW FORM & STORY CAN JOIN FORCES, THROUGH "COLLABORATIVE CONFLICT," FRAUGHT WITH PERIL, TO CREATE A HEART-POUNDING WORK OF ART.
THE RESPECTIVE FUTURES OF THE TWO ARMIES LEAD THE CHARGE: THE WHITE KNIGHT & BLACK KNIGHT.
PREVAILING OVER THIS HIGH-STAKES CHESS GAME OF FORM & STORY—THE WAR OF ART— STANDS THE CHESS PIECE THAT BLENDS THE WHITE KNIGHT OF FORM (AESTHETICS: CHESS JOYCED & THE BLACK KNIGHT OF STORY (SYMBOLICS: CHESS MEANING INTO ONE KNIGHT: THE AVIZAR OF ART, WHO I DUB THE SILVER KNIGHT.
VISUAL EFFECTS SPRINGS FROM MY TALK BY THE SAME TITLE THAT I GAVE IN 2015 FOR THE SYMPOSIUM ON FORMALISM AT THE SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE PROGRAM IN FLORENCE.
IN A BOOK DEDICATED TO A STORY-CENTRIC, SIGNIFICANT ARCHITECTURE, THE SCOPE REFLECTS FORM & STORY'S QUESTING, CREATIVE TALE OF BEAUTY & TRUTH SO WELL TOLD THAT WE FEEL AN UPWELLING OF AESTHETIC & SYMBOLIC EMOTIONS, OVERWHELMED WITH PLEASURE AND IS BUOYED BY INSIGHT. WE FIND OURSELVES FLOORED BY THE TRANSFORMING POWER OF ART.
TO ILLUSTRATE MY THEME OF FORM & STORY, I WEAVE THROUGH THE PAGES OF THIS BOOK MY PERSONAL STORY OF STAR-CROSSED LOVE.
"A STORY," SAYS STORYTELLING THEORIST ROBERT MCKEE, "IS A CREATIVE DEMONSTRATION OF TRUTH." SO IS A BUILDING.
IN A BUILDING, EVERYTHING MUST BE FORMED, BUT A GREAT BUILDING, LIKE A GREAT MOVIE, PRESENTS MORE THAN FORM, MORE THAN VISUAL EFFECTS. A GREAT BUILDING PRESENTS VISUAL EFFECTS. THAT "9" STANDS FOR STORY. TRUTH. THIS BOOK PRESENTS A MANIFESTO. BUILD BEAUTIFUL. BUILD THE TRUTH.
VISUAL EF9ECTS
MANIFESTO
In a building, everything must be formed, but a great building, like a great movie, presents more than Form, more than Visual Effects. A great building presents Visual Effects That "9" stands for Story. Truth.
BUILD BRAVE
TRUTH AND BEAUTY
CONTROL AND SOUL
My book presents a manifesto. Build beautiful. Build the truth.
THE ARCHITECT PAINTER PRESS
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA
VE9
STORY
HILDNER
VE9
VISUAL EF9ECTS
ARCHITECTURE AND THE CHESS GAME OF FORM & STORY
VISUAL EF9ECTS
ARCHITECTURE AND THE CHESS GAME OF FORM & STORY
JEFFREY HILDNER
THE WAR OF ART
VISUAL EF9ECTS
ARCHITECTURE AND THE CHESS GAME OF FORM & STORY
ARCHITECT JEFFREY HILDNER forms a plan to the cinematic metaphor of chess to bring his theory of architecture to life.
"ARCHITECTURE IS A CHESS GAME OF FORM & STORY WAGED ON THE BATTLEFIELD OF A BUILDING AND ITS SITE," Hildner proclaims in his 9-point Visual Effects Manifesto. An award-winning screenwriter as well as an award-winning architect, Hildner frames key insights from the arena of story architecture to his parallel arena of building architecture, expounding on signature themes and concepts that he laid out in his book Daedalus 9. VISUAL EFFECTS reflects his quest to design buildings that present a creative demonstration of the Chess Game of Art, where the White Army of Form (Aesthetics) and the Black Army of Story (Symbolics) battle for our mind and soul and heart—Form & Story fight to create a heart-pounding work of art.
Build beautiful.
BUILD THE TRUTH.
Visual Effects springs from the author's talk by the same title that he gave in 2015 for the Symposium on Formalism at the Syracuse University School of Architecture Program in Florence, Italy.
DAEDALUS
THE SILVER KNIGHT
FOR LAURA
9

The dust jacket of a book is a wide-screen painting: a "Form & Story Landscape" projected onto the horizontal chessboard of art.

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7 *VISUAL EF9ECTS* SPRINGS FROM MY TALK BY THE SAME TITLE THAT I GAVE IN 2016 FOR THE SYMPOSIUM ON FORMALISM AT THE SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE PROGRAM IN FLORENCE.
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THE WAR OF ART

VISUAL EF9ECTS
MANIFESTO

In a building, *everything must be formed*, but a great building, like a great movie, presents more than Form, more than Visual Effects. A great building presents Visual Ef9ects. That "9" stands for Story. Truth.

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BUILD BRAVE.
CONTROL AND SOUL

PRETTY AND GRITTY
L&J: FIRE | KIND OF BLUE

THE ARCHITECT PAINTER PRESS
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

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M.A.R.S.

FORM
STORY

VE9

The *F* Word: Formalism

THE *SCARLET* LETTER OF ARCHITECTURE

Abstract

The F Word symposium presents leading voices from design education, theory, and practice assembled in Florence to discuss the concept of *Formalism*, its definition, history, tactics, and application in architecture today. ***The F Word*** will explore the controversial air that continues to surround this highly debated term and try to reclaim the timeless virtues of operating within a *Formalist* ethos. ***The F Word*** will address our understanding of the relationship between *Form + Content* as it relates to both latent and manifest structural ***resonances within a work.*** ***The F Word*** will distinguish inherent elements of *Formalism* — including the linguistic-based collusion between *Syntax + Sign* — from common misconceptions and illicit misappropriations. The intention: to rediscover within a formally multivalent architecture the potential for an advanced notion of visual literacy and an authentic concept of *Formalism* for the *Future.*

Symposium organized by Richard Rosa
with assistance by Luca Ponsi

10:00 AM Friday | February 19, 2016

Teatro Tasso @ the Convent of the Daughters of Our Lady of *Mercy*
Via Villani 15
50124 Firenze, Italia

Admission and seating by reservation only
For reservation please contact: rrosa@svr.edu or lponsi@svr.edu

Morning Session: 10:00 AM

Welcome

Sasha Perugini
Director, Syracuse University Florence

Introduction + Framework

Richard Rosa
Spliced Scenes of Synthetic Acts of Formalism
Moderator, Syracuse University, Florence Architecture Program Director, Studio Infrared, Firenze

Espresso Shots

Four-minute rapid-fire *'Outline of Premise'* presentations by each participant

Presentations

Luis Diaz
The Inevitability of [or to] Form
Senior Lecturer, BA [Hons] Architecture Program, University of Brighton, Brighton

Andrea Zanderigo
No Architecture Without Form
baukuh, San Rocco, EPFL, Milano

Judith Wolin
(A) Construction
Professor Emeritus, Rhode Island School of Design, New York

Afternoon Session: 2:30 PM

Presentations

Val Warke
The Physique of Unfinalizability
Cornell University, Simitch + Warke Architects, Ithaca

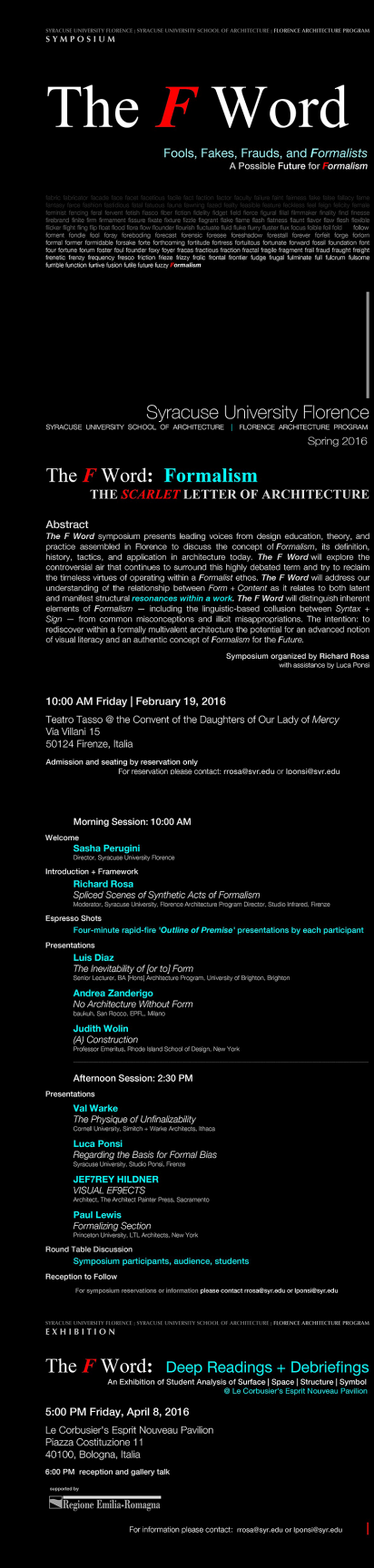
Luca Ponsi
Regarding the Basis for Formal Bias
Syracuse University, Studio Ponsi, Firenze

JEF7REY HILDNER
VISUAL EF9ECTS
Architect, The Architect Painter Press, Sacramento

Paul Lewis
Formalizing Section
Princeton University, LTL Architects, New York

Round Table Discussion

Symposium participants, audience, students



Posters.

Posters are another example of The Symbolic Rectangle (to get back to the main theme of this part of my talk). And we might not realize this unless we stop and think about it. And we might never grasp this obvious reality without words that describe what we're seeing.

Because new words open up new realities. New words help us see things that have been there all along, but we couldn't see.

And the words *Symbolic Rectangle* help me see posters in a new way, whether Hollywood movie posters or School of Architecture posters.

Like Richard Rosa's poster "The *F* Word" (shown on the left and, in part, on the previous page)—a textbook example of a highly controlled aesthetic system that doubles as a content delivery system.

To view more clearly, go to https://soa.syr.edu/live/files/268-the-f-word-formalism-poster

So, on the chessboard of Rosa's poster, which Knight has the upper hand—White Knight or Black Knight?

Move or Meaning?

The Aesthetic Rectangle of The Symbolic Rectangle?

Walls. Let's keep in mind that Formalists regard all rectangles as aesthetic—and rate them, consciously or unconsciously, on an Aesthetic Merit Ladder that runs from 1 to 10. But the errant Black Knight of Meaning challenges Formalists to also regard all rectangles as symbolic—on a Symbolic Merit Ladder, a Symbolic Presence ladder, from 1 to 10. Including rectangles in the form of walls. Like this one. My proposed new façade in 2007 for a building on 116th Street, a few doors down from Broadway, in New York City—namely, the Department of Spanish Literature at Columbia University.

By the way, What do I mean by Silver Knight? A term I've used a few times now. Well, hold that thought. I'm building to that.

182

Another wall. The first built expression by The Architect Painter of a Wall as Symbolic Rectangle . . . Wall as Canvas . . .

1987.

A wall I titled, “Gray Square, Brook, and Smoke”—
the east facade for a project in Princeton, New Jersey, that involved an addition to an existing house known as the Brook House, where I headquartered my practice of architecture for seven years.

Above, left: a study for an unbuilt pergola, a garden gate entrance to the project.

THE SYMBOLIC RECTANGLE
Princeton Studio East Wall
"Gray Square, Brook, and Smoke"

183

If built, the pergola entrance gate would have looked like this, choreographing the journey to my office through layers of space, from public to semipublic to private, along a leftward path that recenters you through a series of Knight's Moves ("L" moves), first bringing you face to face with the honorific wall—on the centerline of the blank square—then giving you a choice to turn right and enter the studio through the minor door (which you can't see in these photographs) or turn left and enter the studio through the major door, which faces the brook.

THE SYMBOLIC RECTANGLE
Princeton Studio East Wall
"Gray Square, Brook, and Smoke"

DANTE | TELESCOPE MONOLITH
Mural in progress. Photo shows the true Monolith proportions: 1:4:9 (depth:width:height)

If you stand at the base of the Monolith and sight along the steel-beam Telescope on a clear night, you can see the North Star.

"Gray Square, Brook, and Smoke" set the stage for another wall, a Vertical Symbolic Rectangle: the Dante|Telescope Monolith—where the Black Knight of Story made a major move forward, advancing more "legibly" into the foreground . . . announcing its clear presence on the game board of my architecture.

The symbolic proportions of the Dante|Telescope Monolith?
Same as the the famous Monolith (Tycho Magnetic Anomaly One, or TMA-1) in Arthur C. Clarke's *2001: A Space Odyssey*: 1:4:9 (depth:width:height)—the square of the first three integers.

(I sometimes show the Dante|Telescope Monolith and facade stretched. Long story.)

185

The Dante|Telescope Monolith partners with the Outdoor Room—the project's most Significant Space, a rectangle defamiliarized via neo-Cubist devices (shown clearly in slide 162)—to create the center of the universe of Dante|Telescope House.

Dante|Telescope House recalls architecture's origins in literature and astronomy.

The first buildings were books, and the first books were buildings: walls as pages and columns of text—a chronicle in stone of the human soul, heart, and mind.

And the first architects?

Astronomer priests who cut out from the profane space of the ordinary world sacred space for the observation and contemplation of reality.

The Northwest/Southeast line (shown in purple) that rips along the Shadow Zone behind the Monolith of this White Knight/Black Knight house parallels the Northwest/Southeast perimeter of the Washington, D.C. diamond.

“Where’s North?”—this project asks: not only celestially and geographically, but also psychologically.

Where’s North in human life? Physically and metaphysically.

For my White Knight: “ARCHITECTURE IS THE STAGE SET FOR THE DRAMA OF LIFE.”

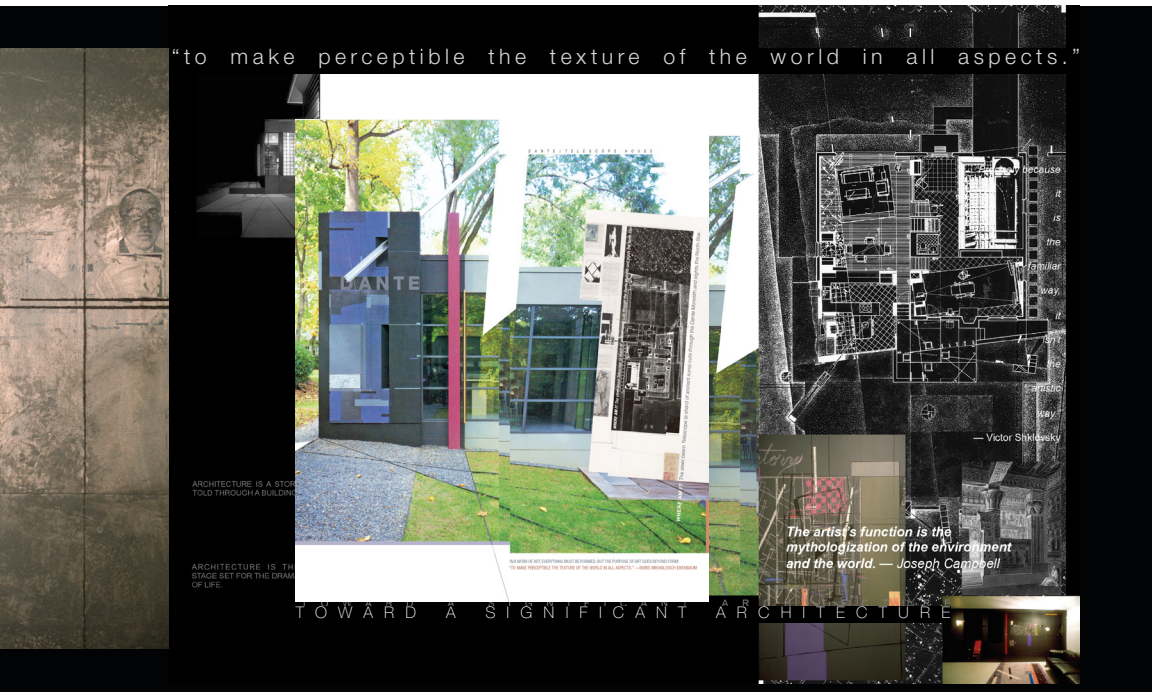
For my Black Knight: “ARCHITECTURE IS A STORY TOLD THROUGH A BUILDING.”

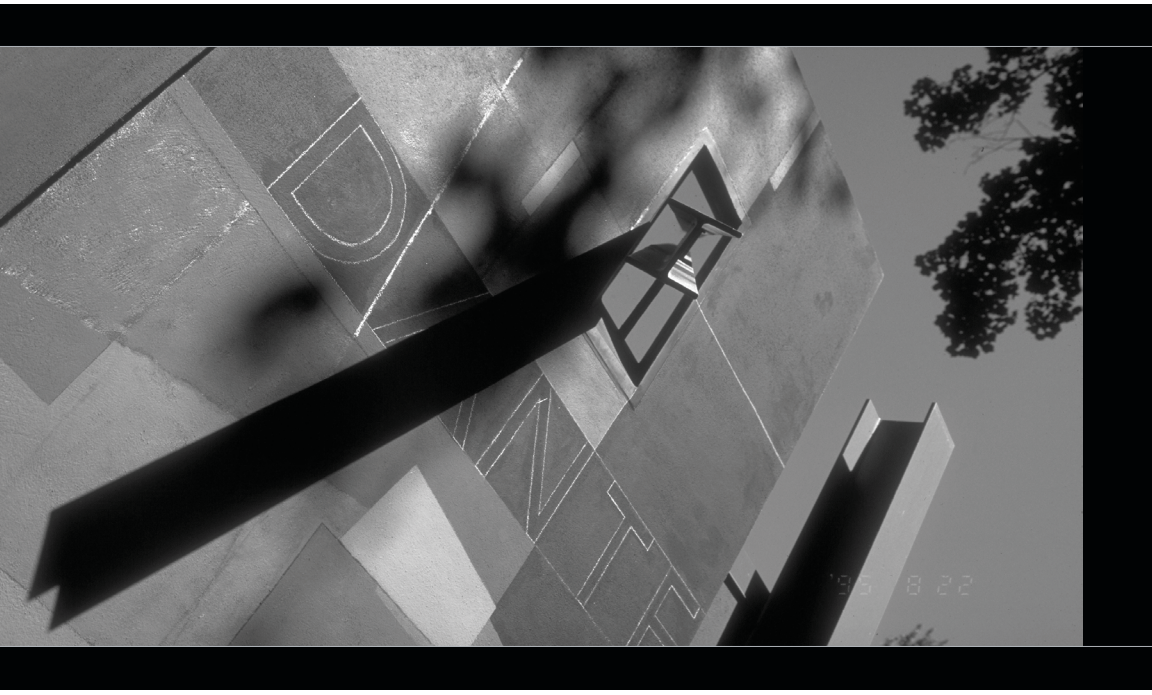
SIDEBAR: Aesthetic & Symbolic Numbers
The number 9 stars prominently in Aesthetic & Symbolic Rectangles. For example, take the major expressions of visual rectangles in modern culture—ratio of height to width. TV, 9:16. Wide-screen movies, 4:9. The number 9 plays a big role in my own work. Dante|Telescope Monolith, 9:4:1 (1 = depth). North Star Telescope Rug, 6:9. This book (width to height), 6:9.

KONZERTE FÜR KLAVIER
"The problem is to evoke the simultaneous presence of painting and architecture."
Theo van Doesburg
DANTE|TELESCOPE HOUSE
DANTE|TELESCOPE HOUSE
"Precisely because it is the familiar way, it isn't the artistic way."
— Victor Shklovsky
TOWARD A SIGNIFICANT ARCHITECTURE

Russian Formalist Boris Mikhailovich Eikhenbaum finally threw up his hands and said, you know what?

In a work of art, everything *must be formed*, but the purpose of art goes beyond form: the purpose is “to make perceptible the texture of the world in all aspects.”


"to make perceptible the texture of the world in all aspects."
because it is the familiar way, it isn't the artistic way.
— Victor Shklovsky
The artist's function is the mythologization of the environment and the world. — Joseph Campbell
TOWARD A SIGNIFICANT ARCHITECTURE



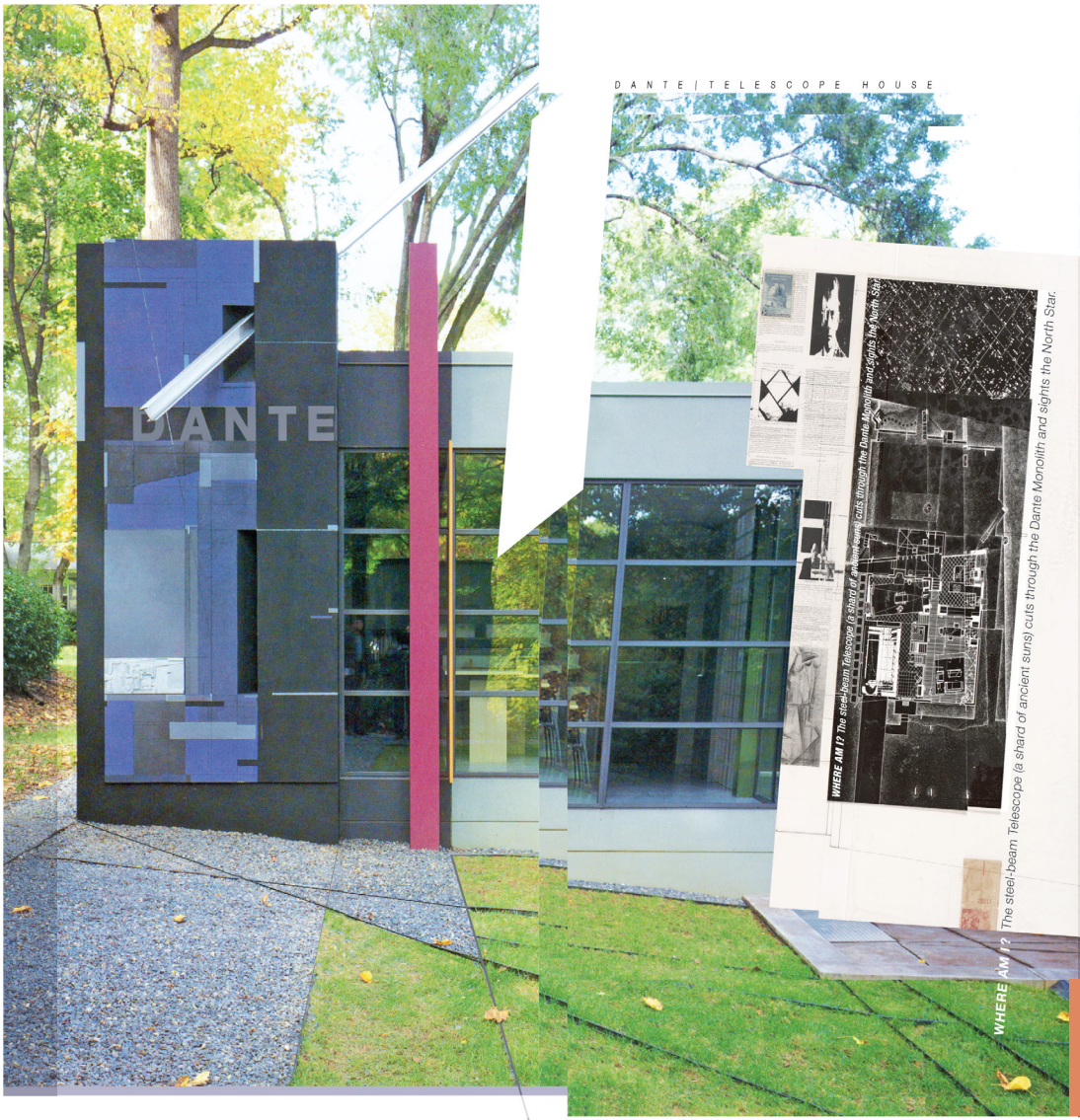
As Joseph Campbell said, “The artist’s function is the mythologization of the environment and the world.”

"to make perceptible the texture of the world in all aspects."

ARCHITECTURE IS THE STAGE SET FOR THE DRAMA OF LIFE

The artist's function is the mythologization of the environment and the world. — *Joseph Campbell*

TOWARD A SIGNIFICANT ARCHITECTURE


DANTE
WHERE AM I? The steel-beam Telescope (a shard of ancient suns) cuts through the Dante Monolith and sights the North Star.

190
[SCENE 8: END] [MIDDLE GAME (ACT 2): END]

As Russian Filmmaker Sergei Eisenstein said, “the basis of every art is conflict.”

And conflict is the basis of what I term **Significant Architecture**.

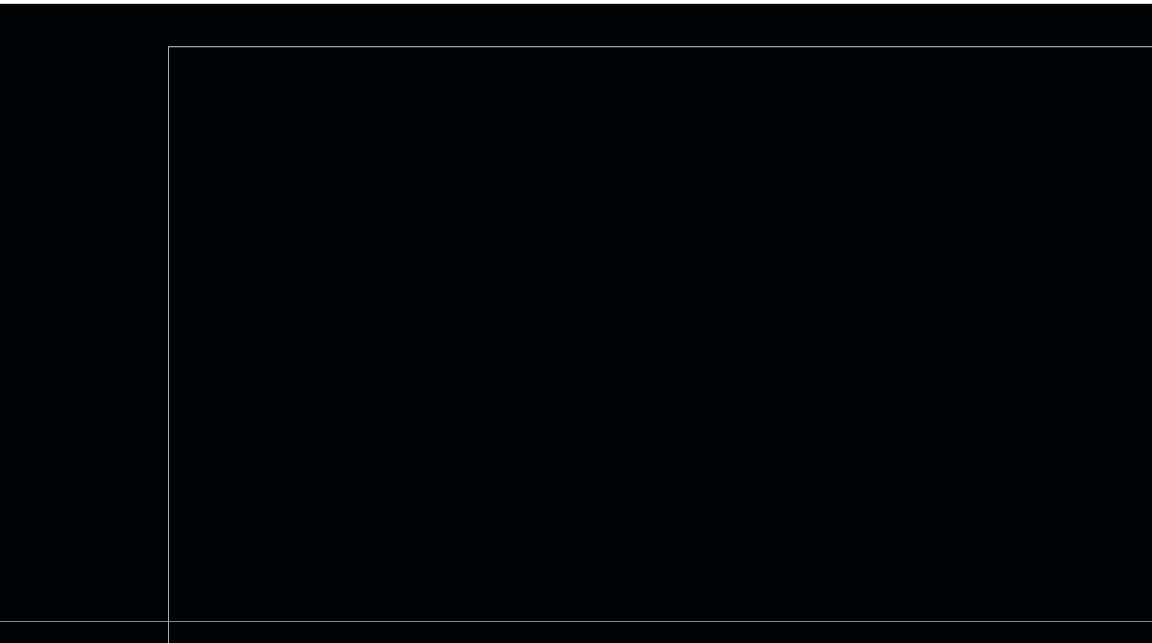
White Knight/Black Knight conflict.

SIGNIFICANTARCHITECTURE

"The basis of every art is conflict." —Sergei Eisenstein

191
[END GAME (ACT 3): START]

END GAME



© 2017 Martin Rak. "Chessboard." Photo via https://500px.com

192
[SCENE 9: START]

The insights of the Russian Formalists have given me a new perspective.

193

On the stage of art, the White Knight of Form plays the lead role.

But the Black Knight of Content shadows our hero in a role that ranges from hovering on the horizon, outside the stage door, to waiting in the wings . . .

to advancing to extra . . .

to landing a supporting role . . .

to co-star.

At every stage along the way, The White Knight/Black Knight DNA blends and becomes a shade of gray.

VISUALEF9ECTS

—the Gray Knight of Visual Ef9ects.

And let's make that Gray Knight shine.
Let's make the gray metallic gray.
Let's make that Gray Knight a Knight in shining armor.

VISUALEF9ECTS

198

The Silver Knight.
Iron Man.

Silver Knights and White Knights belong to the Knights of the Formalism Round Table—Rectangle Table!

Every Knight wields a mighty sword.
Silver Knights a double-edged sword.
White Knights an equally devastating single-edge sword.

And together, these Type 1 and Type 2 Formalist Knights set out to slay the dragons of the familiar and the darkness . . .

199

inSignificant Form

inSignificant Space

inSignificant Architecture

~~inSignificantArchitecture~~ ~~inSignificantSpace~~ ~~inSignificantForm~~

Because the VISUAL **A**FFECTS us.

Deeply.

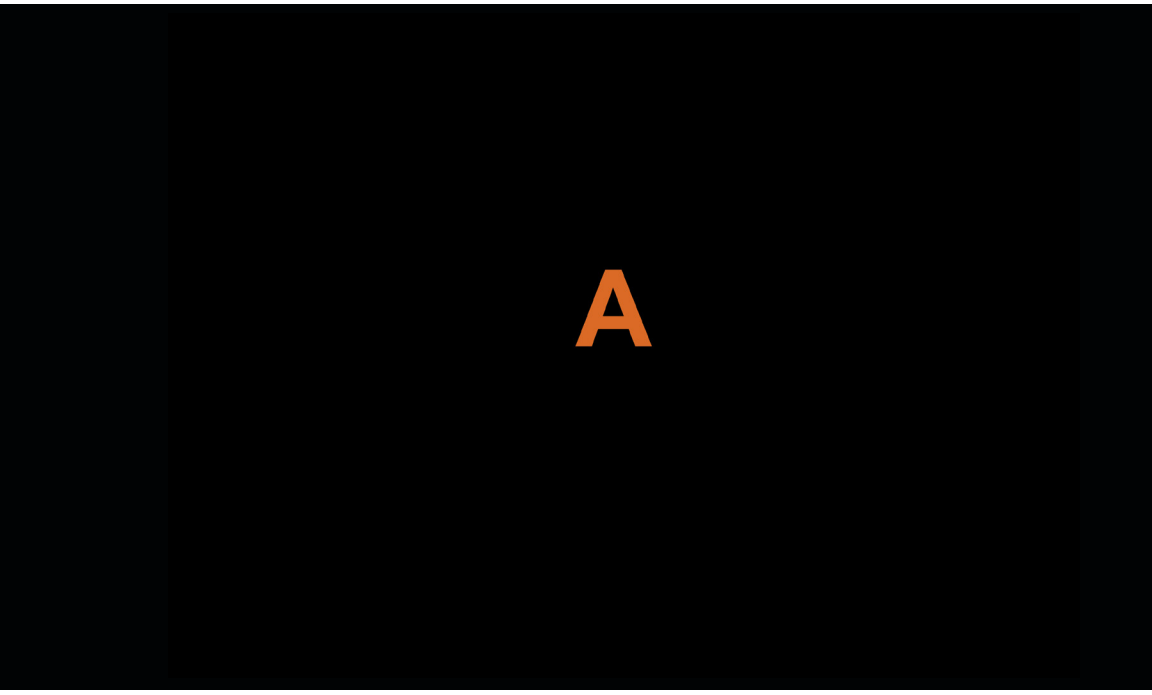
And it all started here, for me, this journey into a thrilling galaxy of Form and Space . . . far far away . . .

VISUALAFFECTS

201

[SCENE 10: END] [END GAME (ACT 3): END] [POSTLUDE: START]

. . . when I learned about Mondrian's "A."


A

© Unknown. Chess King. Photo via http://web.chessdailynews.com

202
[THE END]

Well, almost.

Just three more quick moves.
Count ‘em.

LIVEBRAV

THE ARCHITECT PAINTER PRESS & AVATAR STUDIOS F-SWORD PRODUCTION

T H E E N D

Those two “F”s in VISUAL EFFECTS?

VISUALEFFECTS

They stand for **F**ormalist **F**riends: White Knight and Silver Knight.
James Bond and Iron Man.

VISUALEF 9 ECTS

205
[POSTLUDE: END]

Neither persona is better than the other.
But call me Iron Man.
Because that's the Silver Knight spirit I try to bring to my projects.

THE SILVER KNIGHT OF VISUAL EF9ECTS.

The Knight with the double-edged sword of Form & Story.

And when we honor the ancient Greek imperative, "Know Thyself". . . when we choose our sword . . . then as 20th-century Russian Formalist literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin saw, we more consciously "bring to our projects the architecture of ourselves."

—Russian Formalist literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin

[FADE OUT]

THE END

NOTE: I thank Professor Val Warke of Cornell University for sharing this quote by Mikhail Bakhtin with me after my talk at the Florence symposium, where Val also presented. I've folded Bakhtin's quote into this updated version of my presentation, a version closer to what I hope to show at another symposium or in a different venue someday.

CERVANTES

THE MOUNTAIN

THE KNIGHT, THE MOUNTAIN, AND THE HOUSE: FLORENCE TALKS | 7

THE SYMBOLIC RECTANGLE: The rectangular photo of Meru shows the mountain's central pillar, a sheer wall of granite called the Shark's Fin, giving an iconic look to the mountain that Hindus consider the center of the universe.

© Jimmy Chin. Still from *Meru*, 1915. Photo via www.merufilm.com

BASE CAMP | THE "**SYMBOLIC RECTANGLE**"

As I said in my talk "VISUAL EF9ECTS," I wrote about the concept of The Symbolic Rectangle from a movie angle for the following commentary that I posted on IMDb about the documentary *Meru*. I include this 1000-word commentary as a kind of footnote. On the face of it, the commentary has little to do with my work as a building architect or painter. Only my work as a story architect. But the commentary illustrates how the theory realm of Story dovetails with the theory realm of Form. And as Le Corbusier famously said, "Everything is architecture."

THE MOUNTAIN

BASE CAMP | "THE SYMBOLIC RECTANGLE"

Divorce can crush you.

No, I'm not talking about MERU. That's the lead I wish I'd written for my IMDb commentary on HER (www.imdb.com/user/ur1259009/reviews).

But IMDb won't let me revise my commentary, because I hit the max tweaks IMDb allows.So, undaunted—a fan of non sequitur, incongruity, Russian Formalist "strange-making," and eccentric creative leaps!—I won't bury the lead this time. Even though the lead doesn't go with MERU.

I know, go figure.

But I did get something right in my HER commentary: I introduced the concept that I call The Symbolic Triangle.

HER spins around a One Word Theme: Divorce. The only way through the dark labyrinth of divorce? Acceptance. HER presents a Rite of Passage story that requires the hero, Theo Twombley, to move through the heartache and grief of divorce into an emotional space where he accepts his fate.

And the simple geometry of HER's story triangle helps us see through the sizzle to the substance of the movie's deft thematic structure.

THE SYMBOLIC TRIANGLE: HER

1. TITLE: HER (secondarily, the digital-woman played by Scarlett Johansson—the attractive distractor; primarily, Catherine, the real-life woman who dumps the story's hero).
2. ONE-WORD THEME: Divorce.
3. HERO'S NAME: Theo Twombley (screenwriter Spike Jonze's artfully chosen name, which I translate: "A Man For Whom Women Are 'Deities Unknown'").

Which brings us to MERU.

MERU prompted me to reconfigure the geometry. I shifted to an iconic geometry shared by architecture, painting, literature, and cinema—the archetypal shape of windows, walls, and rooms, of canvases, books, and movie screens.

Enter—

THE SYMBOLIC RECTANGLE

Anchored by four cornerstones of thematic unity crucial to the art of story design:

1. TITLE
2. ONE-WORD THEME
3. SPECIAL WORLD
4. HERO'S NAME

Same as The Symbolic Triangle—except I added Special World.

I learned about the Special World from David McKenna, who co-wrote with Christopher Vogler the book *Memo from the Story Department*, in which Vogler presents the concept "one word theme." I took David's screen writing course at Columbia University. And one day during a class break, we walked and talked. I'd just watched All the President's Men, and I asked David, "What's the Special World?"

Now, I was thinking along the lines of The Washington Post, Investigative Journalism, Political Corruption, Abuse of Power . . .

You get the picture.

So imagine my surprise when David said, "The Wasp & the Jew." Ah! Woodward & Bernstein. That blew me away. And stuck.

(So, for example, the Special World in ERIN BROKOVICH? The lawyer & the beauty queen.)

My contenders for the Special World of ALL THE PRESIDENT'S MEN play a role in story design: ARENA. And thanks to Barbara Nicolosi, who unpacks this concept in her screenwriter talks (catharsis.com), we can distinguish between Special World and Arena.

But where does Arena fit into The Symbolic Rectangle? Well, I had to mull that over. And I didn't want to turn the rectangle into a pentagon. For aesthetic and symbolic reasons, rectangle makes way more sense. As an architect, a painter, and a screenwriter, no way I'm going to base my work on a pentagon! So it hit me: Make the Arena the space defined by the four corners of The Symbolic Rectangle.

Think of a story's Arena as Central Park. Or as The Lawn at UVA. The space the sacred space defined by the perimeter. The stage on which the drama unfolds.

Back to MERU.

THE SYMBOLIC RECTANGLE: MERU

FOUR CORNERS:

1. TITLE: MERU—Meru means "High"
2. ONE-WORD THEME: Trust
3. SPECIAL WORLD: Team
4. HERO'S NAME: Conrad Anker—German origins: Conrad means "bold" and rad "counsel" (rad: "very appealing, good radical"). Anker means "anchor"—a person who provides strength and support.

SPACE:

5. ARENA: Mountain Climbing

Sure, MERU's a documentary, but the filmmakers clearly signal their awareness of story-design concepts encompassed by The Symbolic Rectangle. (Talk about luck for the hero's name!)

MERU tells a story about a trio of brave-beyond-measure mountaineers.

But MERU also tells a story about us. Because as Robert McKee says in his workshop and book *Story*, every movie is a metaphor for life. A metaphor for my life and your life.

MERU sends us the message: To reach our high goal, we too must act boldly—guided by radical good counsel—and provide strength and support for a team in whom we place our trust.

MERU asks: Like Conrad Anker and his team, do you have the wherewithal, courage, and bold character to sacrifice everything to achieve your worthy ideal?

And when your goal's finally within reach, do you have the humility, wisdom, and grit it takes to retreat? Like the mountain climbers—and filmmakers—did just 150 feet short of the summit? (The filmmakers didn't have a movie after team Anker's 2008 unsuccessful climb.) Or are you so hypnotized by your goal that you blunder, ignoring wise counsel, your inner GPS? Do you have the brains, heart, and guts to hit the reset button? To regroup? To "fail, fail again, fail better," as Samuel Beckett put it? Can you endure an ordeal that doubles or triples in magnitude as you scale your mountain?

Because a mountain can crush you.

MERU's heroic story impels us to more fully realize our own heroic story. We climb to the summit of the human spirit. And return to base camp transformed, dumbstruck by a team of people powered by audacity, tenacity, foresight, mettle, and trust.

And love.

McKenna taught me, “The only power of a storyteller is to withhold.”

Where does WITHHOLD fit into The Symbolic Rectangle?

First take: the Perimeter—the line that connects the four corners and outlines the Arena. Because that line? That’s a story’s Power Line.

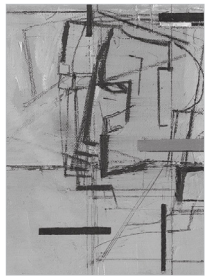
Dimension six of The Symbolic Rectangle.

PERIMETER:

6. WITHHOLD: What does MERU withhold? See the movie. (Right, I’m withholding it.)

(Spoiler Alert: That’s what I said online, “See the movie,” because I didn’t want to spoil it. But I wish I had just spelled it out, and now it’s too late, because IMDb won’t give me another chance to edit the piece. So I’m going to reveal Meru’s emotionally powerful story secret here: Dimension 6 of The Symbolic Rectangle for MERU? MERU’s PERIMETER? MERU’s WITHHOLD? *They’re not his kids.*)

JEF7REY HILDNER | STORY ARCHITECT
December 24, 2015
www.imdb.com/user/ur1259009/reviews



Spring 2016
Architecture Lecture Event
JEF7REY HILDNER
The House of the Human Face
23 February 2016 | 5:00 PM Loggia @ Piazza Savonarola 19, Firenze

THE HOUSE

LAURA & JEF7REY — 1987 | PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

THE HOUSE OF THE HUMAN FACE

1987 | Princeton, New Jersey

Jef7rey & Laura — 2017 | Sacramento, California

THE BEAST AND THE BEAUTY
MAY 18, 2017. WORLD PEACE ROSE GARDEN, CAPITAL PARK, SACRAMENTO, CA. LAURA WEARS MY MAGENTA LACOSTE SHIRT, WHICH SHE WORE ALL THE TIME.

THE DAEDALUS PROJECT: THE HERO'S JOURNEY HOUSE

DREAM HOUSE | Composition For Laura

here is the deepest secret nobody knows

(here is the root of the root and the bud of the bud

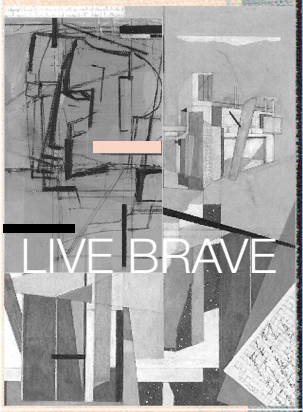
and the sky of the sky of a tree called life; which grows

higher than soul can hope or mind can hide)

and this is the wonder that's keeping the stars apart

i carry your heart (i carry it in my heart)

— e e cummings | 1952



Love, Slate

LAURA LAURA LAURA LAUR

DREAM HOUSE | COMPOSITION FOR LAURA

Earth Arrival Day 11.27.63
Earth Departure Day 11.29.17

East of the sun and west of the moon / We'll build a dream house . . .
—Brooks Bowman
Princeton, 1934

Thank you for loving me, darling

Where are you?
The Architect hasn't rolled out the Floor Plan

What Room in this Cosmic House did you enter?

OUR ROCK, BIHLER POINT | THE SEA RANCH, CALIFORNIA

We hoped someday we would build our Dream House. Where we would stay young together and live for the rest of our lives.

I really miss you
I can't wait to see you again, my love

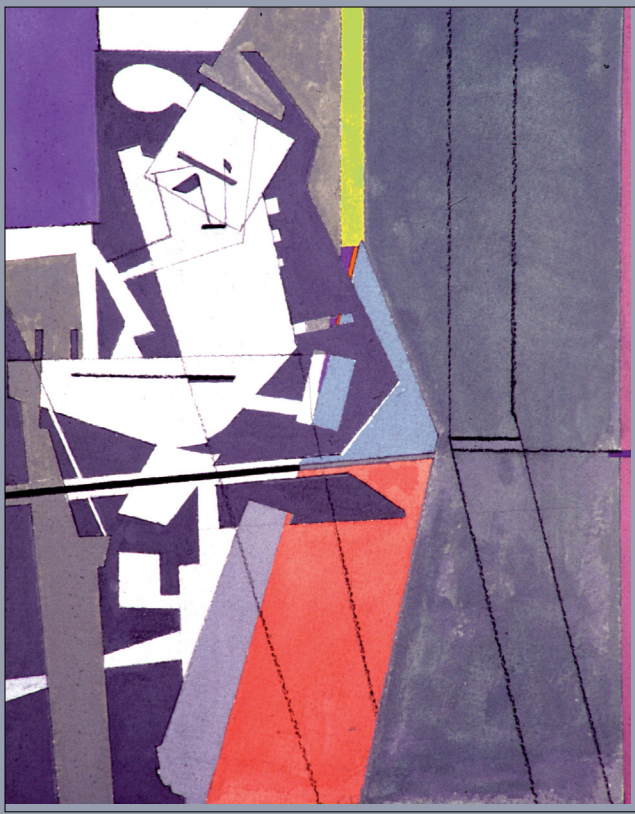
THE HOUSE OF THE HUMAN FACE

For even if I'm far away,
I hold you in my heart.
I sing a secret song to you
each night we are apart.
REMEMBER ME.
—"Remember Me"
by lyricists Robert Lopez & Kristen Anderson-Lopez

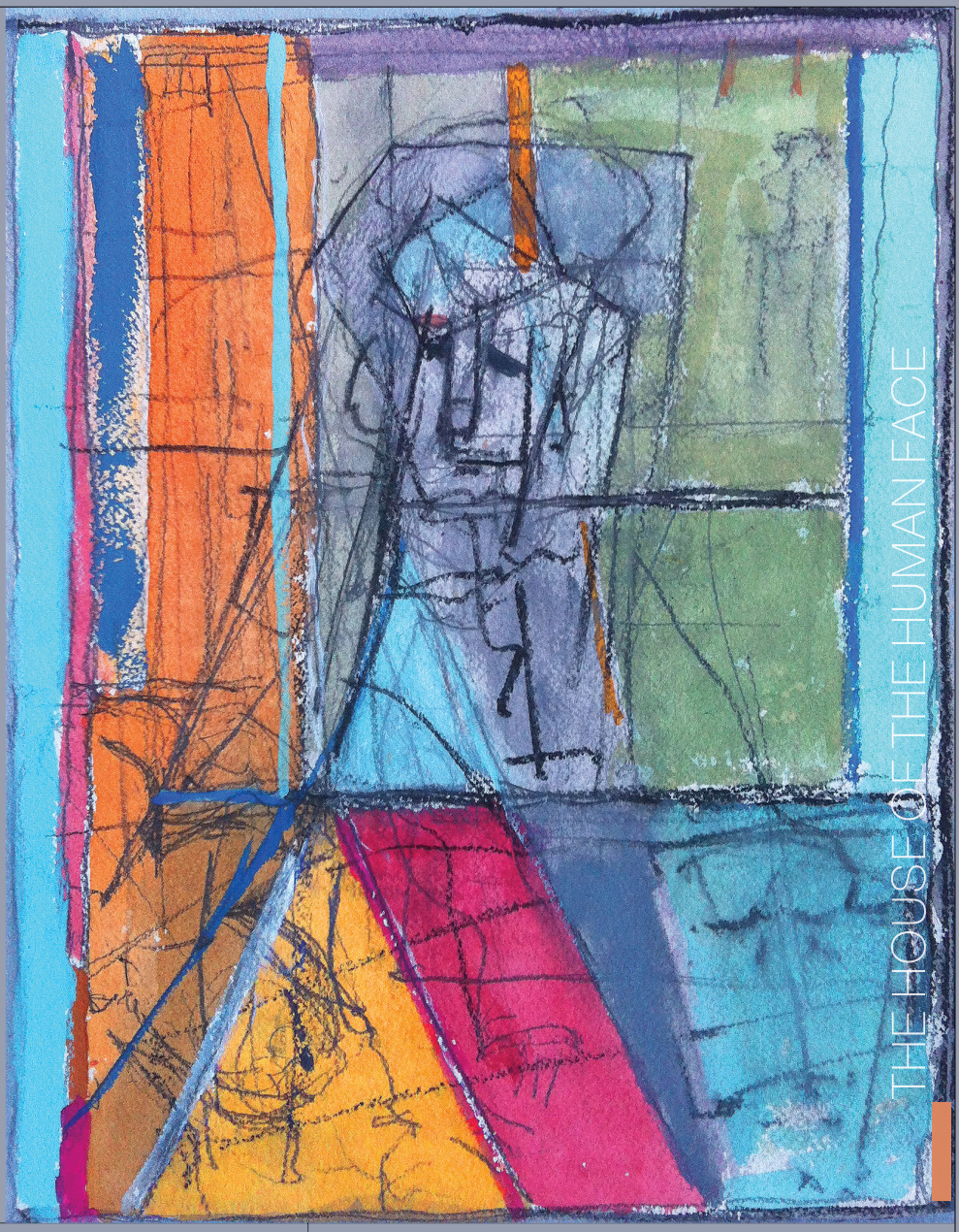
METAPHYSICAL WARRIOR
THE SILVER KNIGHT

MY NORTH STAR

KnightHeadQuarters



CUBIST CITY | 1991, watercolor and pencil on paper, 10 x 14 in.



SELF-PORTRAIT | 1991, watercolor and pencil on paper, 10 x 14 in.

THE HOUSE OF THE HUMAN FACE

I stayed in Florence for a few days after giving my talk "VISUAL EF9ECTS." Richard Rosa, organizer of the Formalism Symposium, asked me to attend his Syracuse University third-year studio review then give another talk. I presented the following offbeat essay, originally titled "Faces of Earth," which I wrote on a whim in April, 2015, when an invitation to Florence, a city I'd never visited and home to one of the most important paintings in the essay, lay many months in the future . . .

Some journeys we take in life wind up full of surprises, landing us in a place we didn't expect, returning us home transformed. My plea to the art gods to See Myself took me on such a trip. At first, I felt Resistance: *I should be working*. But Serendipity led the way. Turns out, I was on a quest true to the The Architect Painter. And not just The Painter, but also —how could I foresee?—The Architect. Upshot? I *was* working.

This essay didn't spring from an interest in anthropomorphic architecture. Either in facades of buildings that look superficially like the human face, e.g. Gunnar Asplund's Villa Snellman (left). Or in architectural aesthetic systems that abstract the deep structure of the human face, like my paintings and drawings.

This essay sprang from a deep personal quest.

A QUEST TO SEE MYSELF | 04.01.15
I wish I could see myself . . . please, let me see my face . . .
I posted to the universe as I drifted off to sleep last night.

Accompanied by a swirl of supporting wishes:
. . . let me see myself through the lens of a painter—help me see my face as paint, as a discernible and clear, easy to grasp system of color . . .

THE HOUSE OF THE HUMAN F A C E

THROUGH THE EYES OF A TYPE 2 FORMALIST

JEF7REY HILDNER | 04.01.15 – 07.05.15

If I primed a canvas with the colors of my face, what paint colors would I dip my brush in to go with my face?

I'm on a color quest. A color quest to see myself. But I've felt pinballed by the moving-target color options pitched by online "Color Me Beautiful" palettes for my color season: Summer.

I've made more than one startling discovery of self-ignorance over the past few weeks about what colors likely look good on me and what colors don't. I've begun to see my wardrobe with brand new eyes, putting clothes I thought were me in the No pile and clothes I'd been reluctant to wear, thinking they weren't me, in the Yes pile. And I say "likely," because among the many paradoxes of human experience, a major paradox is that we can see everybody else's face except our own.

I'm a painter. A colorist. AND. I. CAN'T. SEE. MYSELF.

I wish I could see myself . . .
I wish I could me see my face . . . .

. . . let me see myself through the lens of a painter—

. . . help me see my face as paint,
as a discernible and understandable system of color . . .

If I primed a canvas with the colors of my face, what paint colors would I dip my brush in to go with my face?

And mirrors lie.

But as I drifted off to sleep, I enjoyed a renewed sense of determination to move through the Resistance of Confusion that I'd been feeling about who I am color-wise and experience what I'd already set in motion: the progressive realization of my worthy ideal of Know Thyself Color, my Color System ID.

Why a renewed sense of determination? Because I'd just leafed through one of my favorite books of paintings.

TWIN SISTER, FAMILY, STRANGER

Let me set the stage for last night's bedtime wish and how my wish started to come true today. Over the past 48 hours, I've experienced a series of insights, a domino-ing series of *Aha!* moments:

• First, I decided to see my face as paint. Which helped me frame the question, “If primed a canvas with the colors of my face, what colors would I paint to go with my face?”

• Second, I saw that the human face has four basic color zones: eyes, teeth, hair, and skin. I had a good handle on the colors of my teeth and hair. And I had a recent breakthrough about the color of my eyes. But I was befuddled about my skin. What colors harmonize with the complex color system of my complexion?

• Third, I conjectured that if I were to choose colors in harmony with the complexion of the human face, I would choose either colors that match the face, what I decided to call Twin Sister Colors. Or I would choose colors that create positive contrast with the face, what I decided to call Family Colors. Versus colors that create negative contrast with the human face, which I decided to call Stranger Colors. In other words, I would choose colors that make a Smash versus colors that Clash.

Public Domain, Rembrandt Harmensz. van Rijn, *Portrait of Johannes Wtenbogaert*, 1633. Photo via www.rijksmuseum.nl

To this point, most of the colors on my Summer-season palette strike me as contrasting colors—in theory, pleasing contrasting colors (Family Colors), but I've already learned that, ironically, many of them, when juxtaposed to my face, are clashing colors (Stranger Colors).

When it comes to juxtaposing colors to the human face, here's a good example of Stranger Colors. *Portrait of van Johannes Wtenbogaert*, by Rembrandt (1633) [above].

Winter-season people like Ellen DeGeneres can wear white, but white surrounding most faces decapitates the head, making it an outlier in an alien, clash-crash color system, as in this portrait. Cold white isn't a Family Color (let alone a Twin Sister Color) of that man's somber olive-hued warm face. And though the man probably wore what he considered his best threads, I assume that this color clash wasn't lost on Rembrandt.

© Unknown. Photo via www.stevegtennis.com

As I watched the Tennis Channel and saw the garb of the players and the sideline people, outfitted by the same costume department as the man in the Rembrandt painting, I laughed. Awful. Nonsense. Nothing I would do if I started with a canvas primed with the colors of those people's faces. The clothes dismembered their body parts, heads poking out of clashing colors, arms and legs severed by overwhelming incongruous color-shapes.

For example, Kei Nishikori [above], with brown eyes and warm, yellow-toned skin, outfitted in an American flag: red white and blue.

Major fashion mistake. Nishikori isn't at home in those threads. He isn't wearing those threads—those threads are wearing him.

Those are not Kei Nishikori's Me Colors. Those are totally his Not Me Colors.

© Unknown. Photo via www.sportmagister.com

Think of this way—if we started with those threads and racquet and background and had to dip our brush into a skin color, hair color, and eye color to go with that given set of color elements—that chromatic "site," let's call it—we would dip our brush in tones far less cool . . . and way more warm.

Look how good he looks in red.

But nix the white head band.

© Unknown. Photo via www.skysports.com

And 12-time Grand Slam Champion Novak Djokovic?

When he wears blue. Ouch.

But when he gets it right—marigold, bell pepper yellow, sweet potato orange . . . He looks great.

Total harmony.

Except for the white wrist band.

© Unknown. Photo via http://ftw.usatoday.com

And sometimes, especially on the red clay of Roland Garros, Djokovic sports threads that not only harmonize with his warm Earth & Turf color system . . . but also blend with the court. Figure and Field in beautiful harmony. If we could just fix that Rembrandt white wrist band and white racket handle mistake!

I started noticing *everyone* on TV and what they were wearing, from Teo Leoni on Madame Secretary to the women and men hosting the late-night CNBC feed from London. My newfound ability to see fairly quickly and with increasing confidence what worked and didn't work color-wise on the people I studied represented a big step forward in my Color Perception IQ.

Then at the club, I saw a guy whose color system worked. His dusty brick-red shirt was the same value as his peachy caramel-brown skin.

(Value is the lightness or darkness of a color.) And his hues looked harmonious. Something along these lines [above]. And I thought, *Now, that makes sense. That's one way to add color to a canvas primed with the color of a human face. Same values, different hues—positive contrast hues. Family Color harmony.*

Seeing tennis stars and the guy at the club in their Me Colors gave me a sense of how harmonious I could look in my Me Colors. (If only I knew what they were!) And helped me frame this question, which turned out to mark a major turning point, confirming my preliminary perceptions and conjectures, and slingshotting me forward. How do master colorists choose colors for the human body?

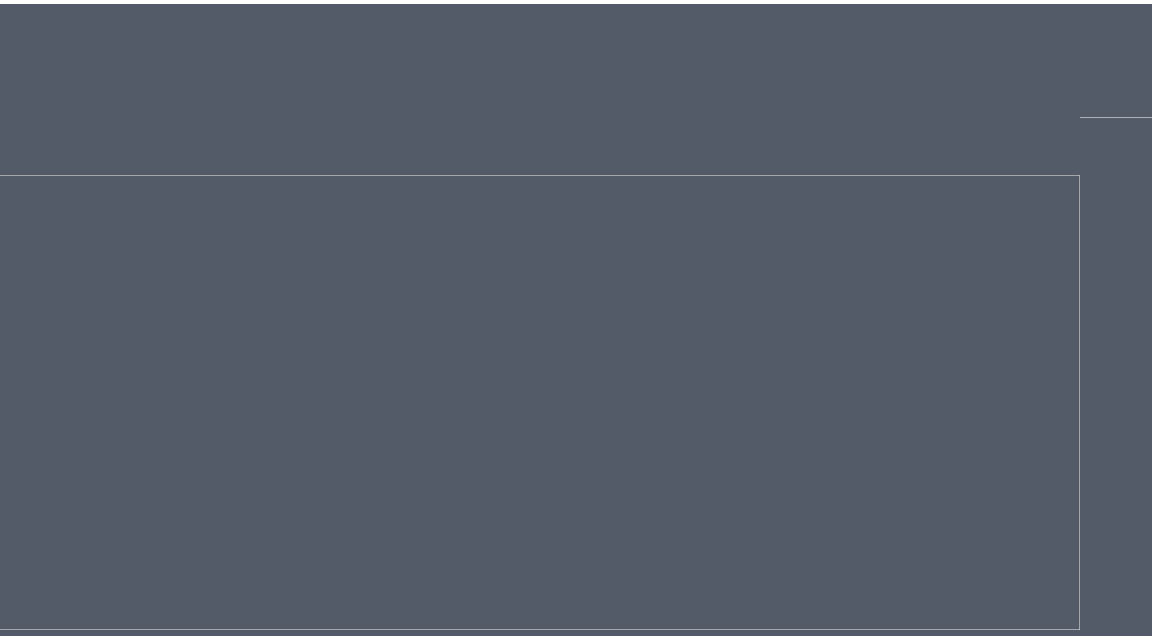
I thought first of Fra Angelico, the 15th-century Italian painter. How did Fra Angelico paint the garb for the human body? How did he choose colors to coordinate with the color system of human flesh?

ANNUNCIATION INSTRUCTION

And that's where the book of favorite paintings I mentioned earlier comes into play. Because when I leafed through my book of Fra Angelico paintings—well, what a revelation. What an instruction.

In some paintings, including *The Annunciation* (ca 1440) [above], a fresco in the Museum of the Convent of San Marco, Florence, Fra Angelico rendered people in Twin Sister Colors, especially Mary, who he draped in clothes that blend seamlessly with her skin tones. You often can't tell where Mary's ivory skin leaves off and her Twin Sister ivory garment begins.

The painter also composed exquisite harmonies through colors that create highly refined positive contrast with people's faces, typically in his renderings of the angel Gabriel, counterpointing Gabriel's Family Color threads to Mary's Twin Sister threads.

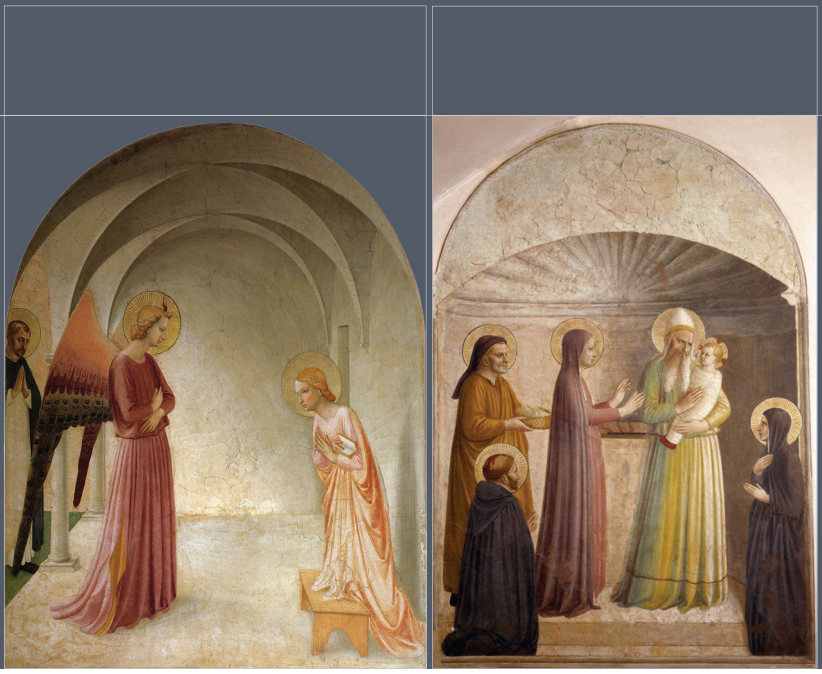


CC BY 2.0. Fra Angelico, *The Annunciation*, ca 1440. Photo via https://commons.wikimedia.org
Paintings by Fra Angelico on the following two pages: ⊘ Public Domain. Photos via https://commons.wikimedia.org

Fra Angelico's paintings help me see how we can successfully choose colors to go with the human face from either side of our Personal Color Coin: Twin Sister side (Mary) or Family side (Gabriel).

But as we learned from the man in Rembrandt's portrait, we can't pair colors with our face that we draw from a source other than our Personal Color Coin.

And Fra Angelico not only drapes people in clothes that blend seamlessly with their skin tones, he drapes people in clothes that also blend seamlessly with the architecture that surrounds people. In *The Annunciation*, Mary's limestone-ivory color persona blends into the limestone-ivory walls and columns of her room. You can't tell the difference between the color and material of Mary's face, hair, neck, garmented torso, and hands or Gabriel's face, hair, neck, and hands and the color and material of the architectural system that acts as the stage set for their intimate drama.



In other depictions of The Annunciation [above, left], and in his depictions of other events in the life of Jesus, Fra Angelico creates similar color systems that seamlessly unify human body, clothing, and architecture.

In *Presentation of Jesus in the Temple* [above, right], for example, the painter blends the face colors of the people with the walls around them (and the halos that surround them). Look at that stunning ensemble of Twin Sister Color threads that drape the baby Jesus and the gorgeous Family Color threads that drape the supporting quintet.

And in *Jesus Appearing to the Magdalene* [opposite page], Fra Angelico marries the torso, neck, and face of Mary Magdalene to the limestone of Jesus's sepulcher and clads Jesus in a limestone robe that not only blends with and amplifies the tonalities of his creamy gold Color ID, but also appears carved from the entry to the sepulcher itself.

Through an aesthetic and symbolic game of positive and negative reciprocal figures, Fra Angelico treats Jesus as a sculpted chess piece, a Rook or a Knight, that has broken free from their limestone prison and leaves behind an impression in the rock crypt created by their escape.

I can't see myself. So I needed someone who could see me. Someone who could proxy for me as accurate analyst of my Color ID. Someone who could size up the fit between my complexion and my eyes when I held up colors to my face in natural light and reliably say, No, Maybe, Yes. I'm lucky. I found someone. Someone who set this whole quest in motion when they looked at me and told me something I'd lived my entire life never knowing: the color of my eyes.

And that someone? The woman to whom I dedicate this book, Laura Middleton.

My true love, whose visual acuity matched the visual beauty of her light blue eyes.

© Patrick A. Tupa, *Rembrandt Van Tupa*, 2009. Photo via www.mnartists.org

When I was a kid, my mom said I have hazel eyes. So that's what my driver's license and passport say. But I Googled images of hazel eyes. Huh? I looked up *hazel*: "a light brown to strong yellowish brown." Not my eyes. My eyes are blue. Hazel eyes are Turf: Warm. My eyes are Surf: Cool. My eyes are the color of the ocean. I have deep slate-blue eyes with a glint of ocean green-gray, depending on the light, and a small amber glow around the iris. Ocean eyes at twilight. Eyes like the setting sun over the Pacific.

Talk about blind. My eyes don't look hazel any more than the chess piece we call Knight looks like a knight.

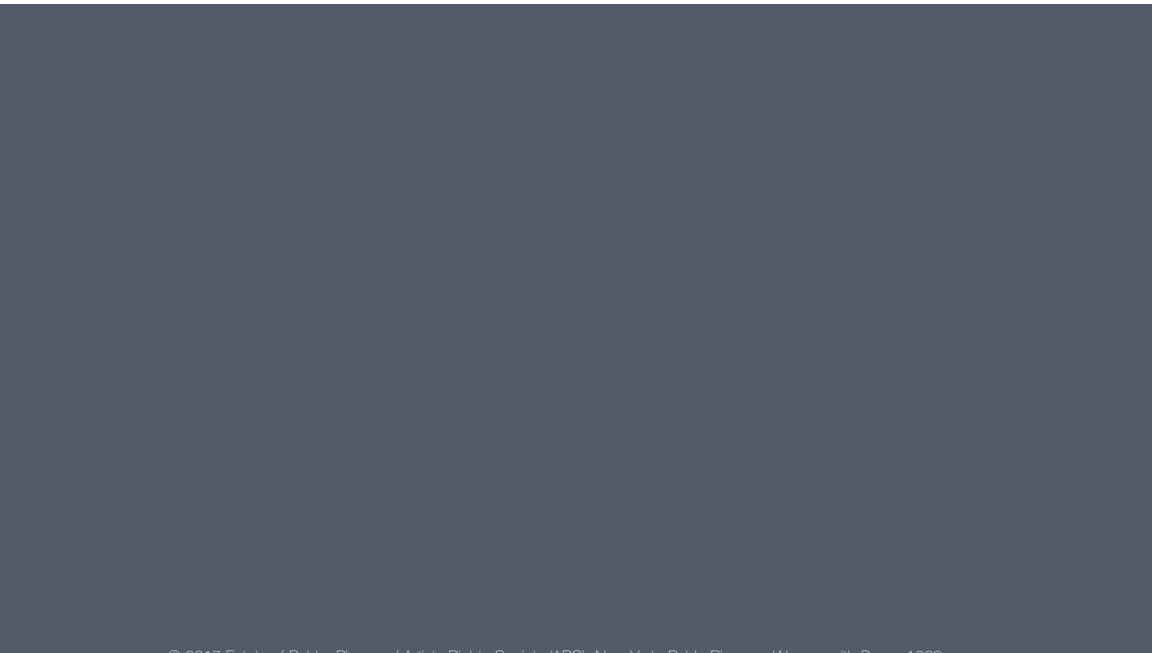
FACES OF EARTH

As I looked out my kitchen window one morning at the colors of my California backyard, the essence of what I'd learned from Fra Angelico and about my eyes hit me. *We come from the earth.*

© Norton Simon Art Foundation. Vincent van Gogh, *Portrait of a Peasant (Patience Escalier)*, 1888. Photo via www.nortonsimon.org

We come from the source of rich tones, undertones, and overtones, chromatic complexity, variety, and intensity. We come from nature.
I suddenly saw my face—and the basis of the color system of my face—for the first time. I saw the source of my complexified and enigmatic ruddy face and ocean eyes in the renderings of Patrick A. Tupa's R*embrandt Van Tupa* (2009) and Van Gogh's *Portrait of a Peasant* (1888). I saw that . . .

My face has its physical origins in the landscape beyond my window.
My face derives its hues and tints and tones and shades from the raw materials that form this planet.
My face reflects the color wheel of the earth.
My face is a geologic canvas primed by the red clay of the ground and by the buff and blueberry-gray rocks of ocean cliffs.
By water and sand and sun-rich soil made from the decomposed fruit of the land: olive groves, bamboo, pearwood . . .



© 2017 Estate of Pablo. Picasso / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Pablo Picasso, *Woman with Pears*, 1909. Photo via www.moma.org

By silver, aluminum, manganese, and nickel.
By limestone, sandstone, marble, and slate.
The human face springs from the quarry of the world.

And Fra Angelico saw this. In *The Annunciation*, he sculpted Gabriel and Mary from the stone of human dwellings. Throughout the artist's paintings, he rendered human flesh a proxy for the materials of Earth that we use to create our sacred spaces.

"Everything is architecture," as Le Corbusier said 500 years after Fra Angelico—including the human face.

The human face is a construction site: a building.

Just ask Picasso.

CUBIST POETRY

In *Woman with Pears* (1909), Picasso builds a woman's face with stones of paint, shaping them into a dynamic architecture of triangular and cubic volumes and deep carved walls in which windows serve as eyes.

Why a woman with pears? My hunch: Because the color of pearwood ranges from dark pinky brown to pale yellow to tan with a slight pinkish tinge, a range of colors that the Spanish painter equates with human flesh. Picasso wants to makes sure that we don't miss the organic connection, aesthetic and symbolic, between the color and physicality of the human body and the fruit of the earth.

Picasso transforms the human face into a house. And he marries the house to its Twin Sister background: the visible and psychological excavation site—the quarry, the forest, the ocean, the land, the mountain—from which the house of the human face springs.

THE HOUSE OF THE ONE WORD COLOR ID

Later in the 15th century, Antonello da Massina picked up where Fra Angelico left off. In *Saint Jerome in His Study* (ca 1475), Antonello chromatically unifies human face, clothing, and architecture. The painter poignantly coordinates Saint Jerome's pale pearwood face and hands with darker, midrange Family Color threads, draping Jerome in an umber/brown shirt and dusty sienna cap that flows into a luxurious dull terra-cotta robe, integrating Jerome colorwise within the drab ochre-undertoned wood and stone interior stage set of his serene dwelling, framing Jerome in the foreground by a sandstone arch and in the middle ground by a like-hued open study, a jigsaw-puzzle-piece asymmetric cabinet, built of African pearwood. Like Fra Angelico, Antonello optically harmonizes the human being within the canvas—on the chessboard—of their outer world, beautifully integrating Saint Jerome into a landscape archetypally warm, not cool. Brown, not blue. Turf, not Surf. A landscape that reflects Saint Jerome's One Word Color ID: Pearwood.

But unlike Fra Angelico, Antonello presents a solitary figure—endowing the scene with undivided focus, concentrating our sensitivities toward the spirit of serenity, introversion, and solitude that emanate from Saint Jerome and his study, and heightening our awareness of the psychological axis that connect's Saint Jerome's inner and outer worlds.

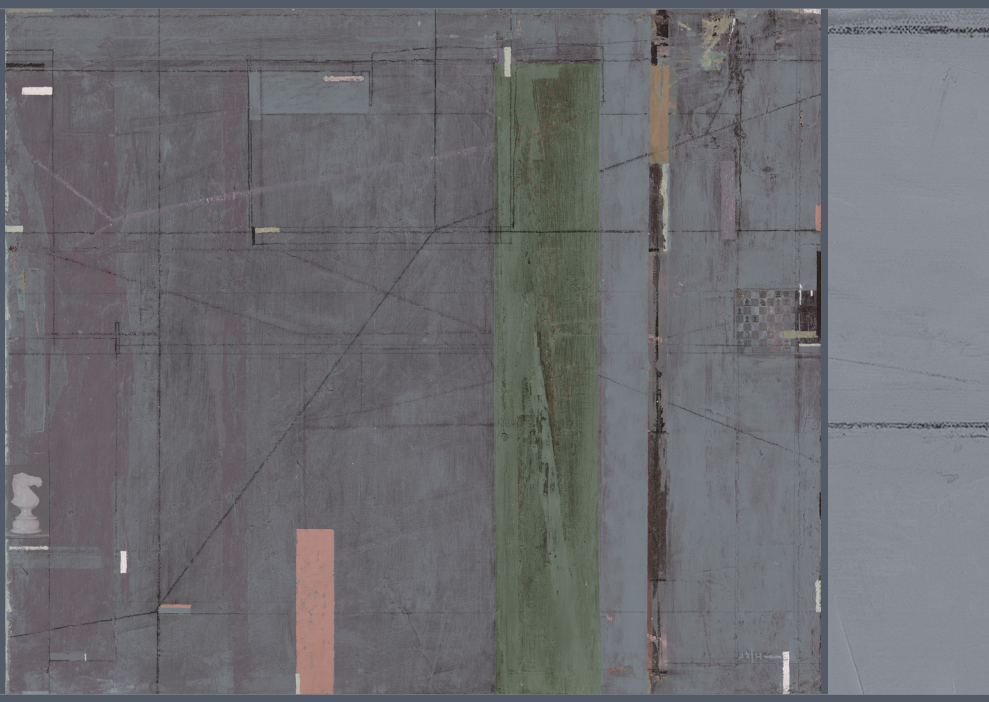
Antonello presents Saint Jerome as contemplative and at peace. We get the sense that the look and feel of his asymmetric private space—and the larger asymmetric place in which his study resides, layered with views to the landscape beyond the interior—radiates organically from the inner mind of the man himself. Saint Jerome's outer world expresses his inner world, where harmonic asymmetries, order, and grace prevail.

Imagine an architecture that continues this artistic tradition. An architecture today that manifests this deeply human, deeply emotional and visual point of view. Imagine an architecture today that rises from the bedrock of this attitude.

A house, say, that emerges from this philosophical consciousness, this spiritual consciousness, this concept of dwelling.

© National Gallery, London. Antonello da Messina, *Saint Jerome in his Study*, c. 1475. Photo via www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/antonello-da-messina-saint-jerome-in-his-study.

Ithaca | digital remix: variation 1.0, "Slate"

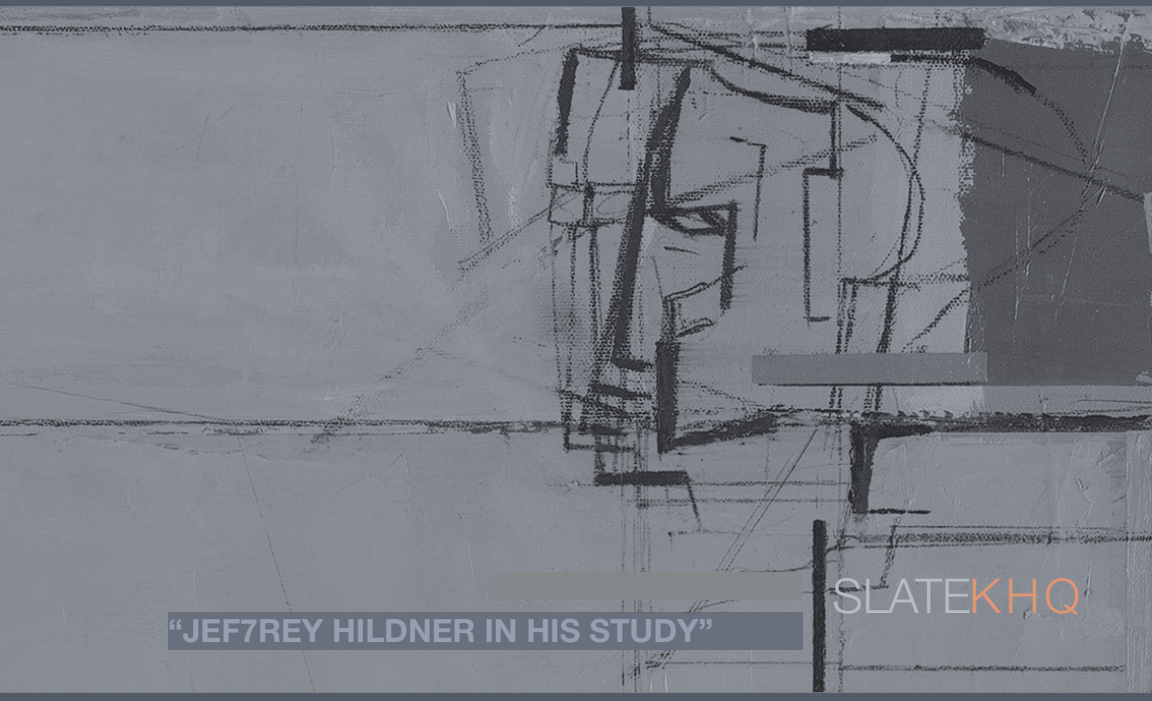


A dwelling that presents the Color ID of the human being who dwells within its walls. A dwelling in which the color system of the dwelling's occupant determines the Color ID of the materials selected for the dwelling itself. A dwelling that reflects perceptual and conceptual agreement between an individual's Color ID, as well as their Inner World ID, and the architecture of the house—walls, floors, ceilings—in which the person lives.

A dwelling that leaps from the spirit and perception that infuses the paintings of Antonello, Picasso, and Fra Angelico.

A dwelling that starts with the face of the occupant: The House of the Human Face.

Imagine such an architecture today.



SLATEKHQ

"JEF7REY HILDNER IN HIS STUDY"

I can picture myself living in such a house. "JEF7REY HILDNER IN HIS STUDY . . . IN **THE HOUSE OF THE SILVER KNIGHT**." A house composed of materials (like silver) that harmonize with my One Word Color ID: the tertiary color *Slate*.

Slate . . . a spectrum of low saturation ocean-and-rock seashore Surf colors ranging from Baritone Blue Gray to Tenor Neutral Gray . . . the name of quarried stone used in construction . . . a chalkboard canvas and a tablet for writing on . . . evoking associations true to my Slate-symbolic identity as architect, painter, and writer.

Slate House, KHQ (Knight HeadQuarters), would present visible harmony—physical and optical harmony—and also invisible harmony: harmony between the inner architecture of my Slate-symbolic identity and the outer architecture of my Slate-aesthetic environment. Harmony of Move & Meaning. Form & Story.

Imagine living in The House of Your One Word Color ID.

We bring to our projects the architecture of ourselves.
– Mikhail Bakhtin
SLATEKHQ

An architect wields three secret powers—3. the power to reveal us

End Game

We bring to our projects the architecture of ourselves.

—Mikhail Bakhtin

ART IS A CHESS GAME OF FORM & STORY WAGED ON THE
BATTLEFIELD OF THE AESTHETIC & SYMBOLIC RECTANGLE
WALL, CANVAS, PAGE, AND SCREEN

CHECK | 8

A movie is a chess game of Form & Story waged on the battlefield of a rectangle — the rectangular chessboard of motion and emotion. The White Army of Form and the Black Army of Story fight the War of Art. They fight for our mind and soul and heart.

© Warner Bros. Still from *Dunkirk*, 2017 Photo via www.ign.com

CLOCKWORK **DUNKIRK** | 8

I posted the following 1000-word commentary on IMDb. I include it here because screenwriter and director Christopher Nolan's movie *Dunkirk* (2017) gives innovative expression to the Form & Story Silver Knight of Visual Ef9ects.

CLOCKWORK DUNKIRK | 8

FILM MAGICIAN CHRISTOPHER NOLAN TELLS THE HARROWING WORLD WAR II STORY CODE-NAMED OPERATION DYNAMO BY CRISSCROSSING THE ARCHITECTURE OF PLACE & TIME . . .

1. If you haven't seen DUNKIRK, don't read this. And if you have seen DUNKIRK, go see it again. Ideally, 70mm film (not digital), 2.20:1 widescreen.

Because DUNKIRK presents far more than a thrilling visceral spectacle and dramatic reenactment of an historical event. This movie must be seen twice—at least twice—to fully grasp its clockwork architecture.

2. For screenwriter and director Christopher Nolan, Cinema is Art—a grand creative chess game costarring Form and Story. On the rectangular chessboard of the silver screen, the White Knight of Form and the Black Knight of Story (my terms) engage in collaborative "conflict"—"the basis of every art," as Sergei Eisenstein said in *Film Form* (1949).

Nolan knows, A movie is a game, and a game has rules. And in DUNKIRK, a Bobby Fischer level expression of the Chess Game of Art, Nolan plays by very special rules.

3. My second viewing confirmed things I saw the first time about Nolan's One Word Theme: Time. (And sidekick, Place.) And revealed far more I didn't see.

Time serves as Nolan's OWT throughout his work—for example, MEMENTO and INTERSTELLAR. Specifically, Story Time. Which in DUNKIRK, Nolan elastically shapes and bends and staggers, previews, rewinds, fast forwards, accelerates, and compresses . . . through his RASHOMON-like artistic filter . . . most obviously conveyed by showing us the downed British pilot's water landing twice.

Think about it. Nolan shows us that water landing twice!

4. Through titles, Nolan posts the Place & Time structure of his story up front. Events on the Mole (Land) take place over a week. On the Sea, in a day. In the Air, in an hour—virtually real time relative to the duration of the movie. Slow Land and faster Sea take place in the Past relative to fastest-of-all Air, which takes place in the Present—the Future relative to Land and Sea—until one fateful moment.

My second viewing revealed methodical nothing-is-random telling and retelling of key scenes as the Past of Land and Sea catch up with the Present of Air. Land and Sea time moves faster and faster, compression accelerating, to the second act climax when BAM, KABOOM . . . the German bomber (Villain) goes down. Conflagration ensues (signaling False Victory), the Moonstone rescues Tommy (Fionn Whitehead) . . . and action rebuilds until Land and Sea and Air intersect, EXPLODE, for one split second into a synchronized convergent Present of cheers at the end of the second act . . . when the three Place & Time Zones crisscross into a reversal, Sea and Land moving forward into the Present and Future . . . and Air gliding into the Past. All Place & Time lead to that crucial climactic Moment . . . when just when he thinks they're safe, startled—the Villain rising to strike one last time—Commander Bolton (Kenneth Branagh) closes his eyes, resigned to their devastating fate . . . and the frame starts to go white . . . then suddenly, this False Defeat turns to Victory as the last German fighter plane gets shot down.

5. On first viewing, how could we know, Follow the Moonstone—captained by Mr. Dawson (Mark Rylance)—which first-time viewers will unlikely spot in the frame of Nolan's first unspooling of the plane's water landing. How could we know, Follow the trawler—the beached bullet-riddled fishing boat—that we see sinking long before we see the soldiers climb into it. But on second viewing, we can see more clearly Nolan's magic act, his sleight of hand, his deft design, simultaneously concealed and revealed, of the Architecture of Place & Time.

6. The stunning Hans Zimmer score and the sound design reinforce Nolan's exacting choreography of Time. Listen for the tick tick. And watch how many times characters look at their watches, including British pilot Farrier (Tom Hardy), who checks his watch and chalks the time on his control panel to calculate how long his fuel will last.

See how beautifully Nolan edits the film at the end, collating the frames of Hoyte van Hoytema's breathtaking cinematography so that the slow peaceful heroic descent of the airplane onto the beach—when Air and Land and Sea again poetically merge—parallels the same slowing down, the same timing, of the train with our mole. (Nolan plays on the meaning of mole, threading our stand in, Tommy, through the story from beginning to end, seen from the back in the first frame and from the front in the last frame. Mole in a figurative sense: The mole is our spy, one of the main ways we get inside the story. He spies for us.)

7. I need a third watch to unravel Nolan's Möbius strip moves. When does Farrier shoot down that last fighter? Does he loop back after he glides by Bolton? Or does Nolan pull a MEMENTO, showing the sequence backward—because Farrier shot the fighter down before gliding by? A riddle signaling how Nolan ups the complexity of his artistic chess game of Form & Story at this dramatic moment. Not only crisscrossing Time and Place . . . but also Direction and Space.

8. Yes, a movie is a game, and a game has rules—rules that the magic of movies can sustain, bend, and break that the Place & Time bound reality of life can't.

But at the same time, the Form & Story art of DUNKIRK presents a creative demonstration of the scientific truth of the relativity of Space and Time.

And Observation.

Nolan riffs on Akira Kurosawa's RASHOMON (1950), gathering witnesses inside and outside the story, summoning us to witness the film's deep structure as we sort out what's happening . . . where . . . and when.

9. My Silver Knight Rating of DUNKIRK—

White Knight (Form): 8.5

Black Knight (Story): 7.5

=

Silver Knight (Form & Story): 8

I explain my Silver Knight Rating system in my IMDb commentary on ARRIVAL—which I reprint on the following pages.

JEF7REY HILDNER | STORY ARCHITECT
July 29, 2017
www.imdb.com/user/ur1259009/reviews

A movie is a chess game of Form & Story waged on the battlefield of a rectangle — the rectangular chessboard of motion and emotion. The White Army of Form and the Black Army of Story fight the War of Art. They fight for our mind and soul and heart.

© Paramount Pictures. Still from *Arrival*, 2016. Photo via *Arrival* teaser at www.youtube.com

ARRIVAL | 9

The concept of chess as a metaphor for art serves as the basis of my evaluation of buildings, paintings, and movies. I explain how this metaphor applies to movies in the following 1000-word commentary about *Arrival* (2016) that I posted on IMDb to launch my Silver Knight Rating system.

ARRIVAL | 9

THE CHESS GAME OF ART—MY SILVER KNIGHT RATING SYSTEM EXPLAINED

Cinema is Art—a grand creative chess game costarring Form and Story. And in keeping with the metaphor of chess, I cast these costars in the role of knights: the White Knight of Form and the Black Knight of Story. When I evaluate a movie, I evaluate the performance of each knight.

But these two knights not only stand alone. On the rectangular chessboard of the silver screen, the White Knight of Form and the Black Knight of Story also partner as one unified knight, through collaborative "conflict"—"the basis of every art," as Sergei Eisenstein said in *Film Form* (1949). Just as opposing sides of a coin, heads and tails, partner as one unified coin.

In the Chess Game of Art, I dub this one unified knight *The Silver Knight of Form & Story*.

The Silver Knight of Form & Story is the Avatar of Art, which represents an ideal—indicated by a perfect Silver Knight Rating of 10. The Silver Knight Rating reflects my restrained judgment as to how well a movie hits this mark.

And the Silver Knight Rating measures more than my intellectual perception of where a movie falls along the spectrum of artistic merit that ranges from mediocrity to mastery. The Silver Knight Rating also factors in how psychologically pleasing I find the move, how deeply the movie impacts me emotionally . . . induces catharsis . . . inspires in me an involuntary welling up of "aesthetic emotion"—a term coined by Clive Bell in *Art* (1914) that Robert McKee redefined in *Story* (1997) as "moments that blaze with a fusion of idea and emotion . . . the simultaneous encounter of thought and feeling."***** The Silver Knight Rating reflects the power of a movie's presentation of Form & Story to do what McKee says life typically can't do, but art can: unite insight and emotion.

My Silver Knight Rating of ARRIVAL—

White Knight (Form): 9

Black Knight (Story): 9

=

Silver Knight (Form & Story): 9

I developed my concept of Form & Story and my chess-based terms White Knight of Form, Black Knight of Story, and Silver Knight of Form & Story in my work as a practicing architect and architectural theorist. I draw from a deep well of research into literary theory and painting to highlight the concept of chess as an analogy or metaphor for art—and a metaphor in which the chess piece of the knight plays the lead role dating to at least Russian Formalist Victor Shklovsky's book *Knight's Move* (1923). I have written extensively about this research and the meaning of my special terms—for example, in my IMDb commentary on THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI. And in my book *Visual Ef9ects*.

But the terms Form and Story as applied to a building do not entirely parallel these terms as applied to a movie, so when it comes to movies, here's what I mean.

FORM = Quality of Production. The Aesthetics of Sight & Sound. Cinematography & Soundtrack, including musical score and sound design. The visible and audible (optical and acoustical) expression of artistic choices that also include set design and film architecture, lighting, wardrobe, visual effects, and editing . . . as well as the quality of acting and directing.

STORY = Quality of Screenplay. Shakespeare or hack? Does the screenplay present a good story well told?

I base my rating on how much a movie sinks below or rises above this bar. For example, does the screenplay present a bad story well told? A ho-hum story told by an amateur? A great story beautifully told, rendered by a Story Master? And of course, Story itself represents an expression of Form, a very demanding expression of Form, requiring of the Story Architect special artistic powers and command of archetypal principles to first design an excellent story and then to craft its telling into an excellent screenplay. All of which factors into the dimension of cinema that I call Story.

So for example, by way of analogy with the allied art of theater, Bertolt Brecht's play *Galileo* can either benefit from an outstanding production or suffer from a poor one. Which would affect the rating for Form, but not for Story.

For my rating of Form, I rely on a frame of reference shaped by my study of music and acting and by my work as a visual artist, principally as a practitioner and theorist of painting and architecture.

For my rating of Story, I rely on a frame of reference shaped by my education as a screenwriter, which helps me size up the degree to which a screenplay reflects advanced and inspired application of universal principles of Story Design spelled out in books like *The Writer's Journey*, by Christopher Vogler; *Memo from the Story Department*, by Christopher Vogler & David McKenna; *Save the Cat!*, by Blake Snyder; and *Story*, by Robert McKee.

I also factor in the degree to which story design measures up to what I call The Symbolic Rectangle, which I lay out in my IMDb commentary on MERU.

Bottom line, by way of analogy further afield, Does the expression of Form & Story that a movie presents have more to do with the level of amateur cycling that my nifty three-speed Brooklyn Flyer and my cycling skill set represent? Or with the level of professional cycling that we associate with the quality of bikes and skill sets of the competitors in the Tour de France? Only movies that rank as worthy of the Tour de France, as it were, get highest Silver Knight Ratings.

Like ARRIVAL. An expression of Form & Story summed up in one word: Exquisite. Everything about the movie radiates creative genius—complex,

deep, multi-layered, intellectually profound, and visually and aurally beautiful, building through its masterful story design to a stunning convergence of insight, exhilaration, and heartbreak. I'm one of the lucky few who saw ARRIVAL before laying eyes on the poster or knowing the genre or even the logline. Thank, God, because the IMDb logline gives away more than I'd want to know before plopping down in my seat at the theater, "A linguist is recruited by the military to communicate with alien life-forms after twelve mysterious spacecrafts land around the world." But, blissfully, the logline keeps us light-years from the heart of the story, what the story is really about. (Which I won't spoil here.) Including, thematically, what it means to be Human. Could there be a universal language of Time, which loops us continually around the circle of Life, flashing back, flashing forward, freeing us to experience boundless synchronicities of departure and arrival—on behalf of the survival and harmony of individuals and civilizations throughout our multi-dimensional universe? Can we control our destiny when we learn the universal language of Time? And what do we do when our humanity and time converge to require of us to make choices we cannot fathom making? Just like THE INSIDER, the title of ARRIVAL has a double meaning. Two Insiders in THE INSIDER, not just Jeffrey Wigand, but also Lowell Bergman. Same with ARRIVAL. Two Arrivals in ARRIVAL—not just aliens. And like the constellation Orion in the night sky, this parallel Arrival hides in the title in plain view. If you know where to look for it, you can't miss it. And if you do miss it, the DVD special features, where Ted Chiang talks about his short story, adapted by Eric Heisserer for the screen, will give you a clue. No wonder the Academy nominated Heisserer's screenplay for Best Adapted Screenplay—it should have won. ARRIVAL presents a stunning story, two symbolic stories woven together as one, rendered by a team of remarkable artists who give this exquisite Symbolic Story exquisite Visual Form.

JEF7REY HILDNER | STORY ARCHITECT
August 2, 2017
www.imdb.com/user/ur1259009/reviews

***NOTE:** Robert McKee gives an ironic twist to the meaning of "aesthetic emotion." Clive Bell coined the term to defend abstract art. *Aesthetics!* Bell said that aesthetic emotion rises within us from the impact of the aesthetic dimension itself. Form triggers emotion! Meaning not required. In fact, Bell maintained (again, in defense of abstract art), Form *is* Meaning! The only "Meaning" required. No need for Meaning *outside* of Form or beyond the Meaning of Form itself. I allude elsewhere in this book, *Visual Ef9ects*—specifically, in my slide-show talk "Visual Ef9ects"—to the clash early in the 20th-century between this British Formalist viewpoint and the Russian Formalist viewpoint. Bell V. Shklovsky. And for the past 100 years, in the education and practice of architecture, Clive Bell's viewpoint has had the upper hand: Form. Form. Form! Abstract Form, yes; Story, no. Aesthetics, yes; Symbolics, no. Chess Moves, yes; Chess Meaning, no. My theory and practice of architecture takes the less popular position: Yes, to all of it.

UNIVERSAL STUDIOS. STAGE SET FOR WATERWORLD

ARCHITECTURE IS A STORY TOLD THROUGH A BUILDING
ARCHITECTURE IS THE STAGE SET FOR THE DRAMA OF LIFE — AND DEATH

ARCHITECTURE AS STAGE SET—
A FRAME OF REFERENCE

The best architectural stage sets for the drama of life draw from both sides of the Silver Coin of Architecture: Form and Story.

Especially Story.

Nobody knows this better, or does this better, than film architects. Because they know—as ancient people knew (and we all still know deep down today)—that buildings can convey Meaning.

Buildings are Metaphors.

And for film architects, when it comes to designing stage sets for movies, Meaning stands at the top of the ladder of design goals.

Meaning = Priority #1.

Because whatever film architects design must first and foremost serve the god of Story.

Must evoke, in the hearts and minds of the audience, associations and meanings that sync with—and act as an agent of—Story.

Form doesn't follow Function. Form follows Story.

Because a movie set functions primarily as a Symbolic Image System.

An Emotional Image System.

An outer physical expression of the inner psychological life of the people for whom the architecture serves as stage set for the drama of their lives.

The best movie architecture presents Form and Story as costars.

White Knight (Form) and Black Knight (Story) unite to become one Knight: the Silver Knight.

The Silver Knight of Form & Story.

Ideally, sweeping us off our feet . . .

Like the stage sets for HARRY POTTER and WATERWORLD.

UNIVERSAL STUDIOS STAGE SET FOR WATERWORLD | BACKGROUND: HOGWARTS SCHOOL FOR HARRY POTTER

And THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI.

My recent tour of Universal Studios (June 2017) helped me see all of this more clearly. From the barren, run-down Bates Motel for Hitchcock's PSYCHO on Universal's backlot to the retro dystopian riffraff-spattered iron walls that imprison WATERWORLD at the heart of Universal's theme park, the buildings and stage-set architecture of movies roll Aesthetics and Symbolics all into one.

Into one strong, unified expression of Move & Meaning that serves as the backdrop for the drama of an unfolding Story, reinforcing this Story through every Move.

WHITE KNIGHT ARCHITECTS RULE

To this point, I have said that Architecture is a silver coin. Inscribed on one side, FORM: Architecture is the stage set for the drama of life. Inscribed on the other side, STORY. Architecture is a story told through a building.

I've maintained that the avatar of the Form side of the coin is the White Knight: Aesthetics. Versus the avatar of the Story side of the coin, the Black Knight: Symbolics.

And I've maintained that most architects (and I'm talking about 99% of the serious practitioners and teachers of architecture today) are White Knight Architects. They make stage sets for the drama of our lives that represent Aesthetic Moves, not Symbolic Meanings.

Buildings where the Black Knight doesn't exist.

Outlawed.

All of which I believe is true. For the most part. For real-world architects. In the culture of architecture. Reinforced by architectural education.

SILVER COIN #2

But when it comes to defining the two sides of what I call the Silver Coin of Architecture (aka the Silver Coin of Art), I'd like to offer another take.

Because if we shift the frame of reference . . . prompted by what we learn from film architecture . . .

We could say, instead, Architecture is the stage set for the drama of life—and, ideally, draws inspiration and expression from both sides of the Silver Coin of Art. Inscribed on one side, FORM: Architecture is an Abstract Aesthetic System of Moves—like chess. Inscribed on the other side, STORY: Architecture is a Symbolic Image System of Meaning—like chess.

Architecture is chess.

Just like the first version of the Silver Coin (Silver Coin #1), you see FORM and STORY etched on opposite sides. That stays the same. But I change the taglines that go with FORM and STORY for Silver Coin #2. And I elevate Silver Coin #1's tagline for FORM to the top of the pyramid. For Silver Coin #2, *Architecture is the stage set for the drama of life* serves as the major controlling idea.

Silver Coin #2 riffs on the same themes but honors more nearly the truth of the double-nature of stage sets in theater, TV, and movies, and my frame of reference for Dante|Telescope House.

Film architects and real-world architects treat Silver Coin #2 the same way they treat Silver Coin #1. Film architects trade in both sides, sometimes devising spectacular Aesthetic Moves and Form, but Form always in the service of Story. And non-film architects make buildings that reflect the notion that the coin of art that has only one side: Form. These real-world designers ignore, downplay, or reject the side stamped Story. Architecture is a Symbolic Image System of Meaning—like chess? For these architects, buildings are quarters with heads but no tails. They treat the flip sides of the Silver Coins of Architecture as blank.

The buildings of real-world designers typically boil down to interest in a Symbolic Image System only insofar as the Abstract Aesthetic System *is* the Symbolic Image System: Form *is* Content. Form *is* Meaning.

Architectural culture, shaped by avant-garde practitioners and premier schools, esteems Aesthetics. Aesthetic chops. Form-Making chops.

According to this frame of reference, people, not buildings, supply Meaning (Meaning *outside* of Form, that is)—the drama that unfolds in the movie of life among the cast who work, and play, and dwell in buildings supply the Story. Or, for example, like Diller Scofidio + Renfro's BAMPFA (Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive), the museum's collection and activities supply the Meaning and Story. Architecture functions at BAMPFA, as in most significant architecture today, as the Meaning-neutral backdrop to a White Knight celebration of the supercool Aesthetics of planes, shapes, materials, and light.

VISUAL EFFECTS VERSUS VISUALEFFECTS

Most modern architects, including celebrity architects, aspire to make beautiful Aesthetic Machines. Like White Knight Form-Making superstars Thom Mayne, Rem Koolhaas, and Zaha Hadid. Whose work thrills me.

But a few architects, like film architects, want to make stage sets for our lives that function both as Aesthetic Machines *and* Emotional Machines. Buildings simultaneously Abstract and Symbolic.

As, say, Le Corbusier did at Ronchamp, his chapel for Notre Dame du Haut in France. And more recently, as Steven Holl did at Seattle University's Chapel of St. Ignatius. Corb and Holl created stage sets of exquisite materials-and-light Form-Making Moves and infused these stage sets with Meaning through understated Symbolic Image Systems. Not a surprising approach for a chapel, but Corb treated a government building the same way in the Palace of Assembly in Chandigarh, India, a Silver Knight masterpiece.

But this kind of architecture today represents far less than even 1%. Because apart from hoping to nail the practical side of buildings, such as function and sustainabilty, most non-film architects hope to achieve little more for their buildings than to equal the design standards and production values we admire in a beautifully designed MoMA toaster or a Tesla.

A worthy goal. And very hard to achieve. But a goal that equates a building with a habitable type of industrial design, aesthetic engineering, or whimsical sculpture. Architecture as Special Effects. Visual Effects.

Versus Visual Ef9ects.

The Visual Ef9ects Architect requires more of a building. Requires that architects draw their power and purpose from designing places—stage sets for the drama of life—that trade consciously and intensely and to varying degrees equally in both sides of the Silver Coins of Art.

As I tried to do in Dante|Telescope House.

TWO TYPES OF SILVER KNIGHT ARCHITECTS

Rare are the non-film architects who, unlike the best film architects, aspire to make a Visual Ef9ects Architecture, an architecture for which a fusion of White Knight and Black Knight—Aesthetics & Symbolics, Form & Story—becomes the avatar: the Silver Knight.

And even rarer? Rarer than this Type-A Silver Knight Architect?

Silver Knight Architects who push the limits of the Meaning and Story side of the Silver Coins of Architecture, not content to simply evoke associations and emotions or conjure a mood through the visible and subliminal power of an architecture that functions as a Symbolic Image System. Silver Knight Architects who want to actually *tell a story through a building*.

Like architect Giuseppe Terragni in his unbuilt Danteum—a major influence on Dante|Telescope House.

(See my tributes to Terragni and Le Corbusier, p. 682.)

This oddball Type-B Silver Knight Architect—the 1% of the 1%—sees buildings not only as Aesthetic Machines, Symbolic Machines, and Emotional Machines. But also as Enlightenment Machines, Memory Machines, Insight Machines. Stage-Set Story-Telling Machines designed for the observation and contemplation of the Architecture of Reality.

ARCHITECTURE AS SCREENPLAY

This rare Silver Knight Architect aspires to realize projects funded by some paradoxical alchemy of both Silver Coins of Architecture, Silver Coin #1 and Silver Coin #2.

For this architect, a building can potentially present not only a White Knight intelligent & Black Knight resonant (Aesthetic & Symbolic) stage set for the story of our lives—a building can present a Story of its own.

. . . a Story outside of the drama of our own lives, but which at the same time relates to our lives, enriches our lives, anchors our lives . . . illuminates our lives . . . an architecture that plays not the supporting role to Story, but plays the lead role as Story.

A Silver Knight Architecture. An architecture not simply of implied or even explicit Meaning (like Dante|Telescope House), but an architecture that spins a yarn through a narrative in stone. Or concrete, glass, and steel.

Form & Story. Balanced. Reciprocal. Synchronistic. White Knight & Black Knight producing a Silver Knight fusion shaped by their complex and collaborative "battle." Harmony. Dissonance. Tension.

Like a dominant 13th chord in music.

. . . an architecture that acts as the narrator and agent of a Universal Story that binds us all to the deeper architecture of ourselves . . . and the world.

And through this Silver Knight Architecture, this White Knight & Black Knight Visual Ef9ects Architecture, we might newly grasp the reality of the ancient origins, the original identity, of architecture: Writing on Walls. Columns of Text. The first buildings were books, and the first books were buildings.

Architecture began as storytelling.

And a building has the potential to reveal this intrinsic dimension of architecture. To reveal what today's architects conceal.

Architecture is a screenplay: a story told through a building.

ARCHITECTURE: A CREATIVE DEMONSTRATION OF TRUTH

Architecture is the stage set for the drama of life.

Simultaneously:
An idealized expression of the White Knight of Form:
an Abstract Aesthetic System of Moves.
An idealized expression of the Black Knight of Story:
a Symbolic Image System of Meaning.

A Silver Knight.

Potentially a stage set *and* a screenplay: a Significant Place *and* a Story.

And if, as Robert McKee says, "Story is the creative demonstration of truth," then so is Architecture.

Architecture is the creative demonstration of truth.

And on this intellectual foundation, I hope to design three houses that comprise **THE DAEDALUS PROJECT—A TRILOGY**.

Part 1: The Hero's Journey House

THE VISUAL = THE VISIBLE + THE INVISIBLE

A final note.

My distinction between the Visible and the Invisible, which I maintain add up to the Visual, doesn't coincide neatly with the two sides of the Silver Coins of Architecture.

The Visible and the Invisible don't pair up in a clear-cut way with Form and Story or Aesthetics and Symbolics.

Because while Aesthetics, I feel, pertains exclusively to what we can see, to the Visible, the dimension of Symbolics in art, in architecture, presents itself both to the eyes and to the mind, to the senses and the intellect, affects us both through the Visible and the Invisible.

Which is to say, you can't present, whether through a building, a painting or a movie set, a Symbolic Image System that you can't see!

But through the door of the Visible we enter the Invisible. Through the way the Visible is shaped, through semi-abstract and representational objects, through words attached to what's Visible, like the names of chess pieces, or through words themselves, as Picasso and Braque spelled out in Synthetic Cubism (and I spelled out for Dante|Telescope House), the Visible Symbolic Image System triggers recognition on the part of the viewer of the Invisible . . . stirring within intuitive viewers appreciation for a chain reaction of Meaning that the eyes cannot see . . . evoking within discerning viewers deep waves of association, of ideally enriching if not also riveting intellectual and emotional depth.

A Symbolic Image System can make these associations explicit to some degree—for example, the look and the name of the chess piece called a "knight" (oddly, not a knight at all, but the horse that a knight rides) or in the chess game of my building Dante|Telescope House, the look and name of the major chess piece, the Dante|Telescope Monolith.

The Dante|Telescope Monolith orients us to both the outer world, the North Star, and the inner world:

Dante means "everlasting, enduring."

ART PRESENTS MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

But no matter how much a Symbolic Image System presents that we can see, it hides far more that we cannot see.

No matter how much a Symbolic Image System reveals about a building's philosophical and poetic structure—its premise, controlling ideas, themes, and storylines—a fully developed Symbolic Image System conceals far more, conveying the larger galaxy of Meaning implicitly, merely hinting at the vast Invisible universe of Meaning hidden behind the curtain, inaccessible to the eyes.

QUEST OF THE SILVER KNIGHT ARCHITECT

The Silver Knight Architect, both Type A and Type B, sees a building as simultaneously Aesthetic & Symbolic. Something to look at . . . and something that causes us to look within.

A place to see and a place to be . . . true to the origin of the word *building*, which means "to be."

The Silver Knight Architect molds and shapes—*forms*—everything in their building into a unique expression of the Visible and Invisible dimensions of the project's controlling ideas, ideally resulting in an advanced and original, but somehow also archetypal, integration of the Silver Knight Architect's Abstract Aesthetic System and Symbolic Image System.

Why?

To give occupants and viewers of a building the pleasure of aesthetic emotion, insight, and catharsis.

To give people a kind of psychological or spiritual transformation, leaving people dramatically different, for good, than they were before they encountered the building.

A building is a work of art that invites us not only to dwell within its walls, but also to explore within ourselves . . . a creative expression of truth that inspires us not only to celebrate the physical architecture of materials but to also contemplate the metaphysical architecture of our being.

Existence.

Reality.

Such a building, based on the Silver Coins of Architecture, minted in the Treasury of Art, can give people an entirely new frame of reference not only for the architecture of a building, but also for the architecture of their lives.

I dream of showing proof of this truth. I aspire to build . . .

A STERLING SILVER ARCHITECTURE OF VISUALEFFECTS.

"Do I contradict myself?
Very well then I contradict myself,
(I am large, I contain multitudes.)"

—Walt Whitman, "Song of Myself" from *Leaves of Grass*

THE ARCHITECT AND THE NURSE

star-crossed lovers

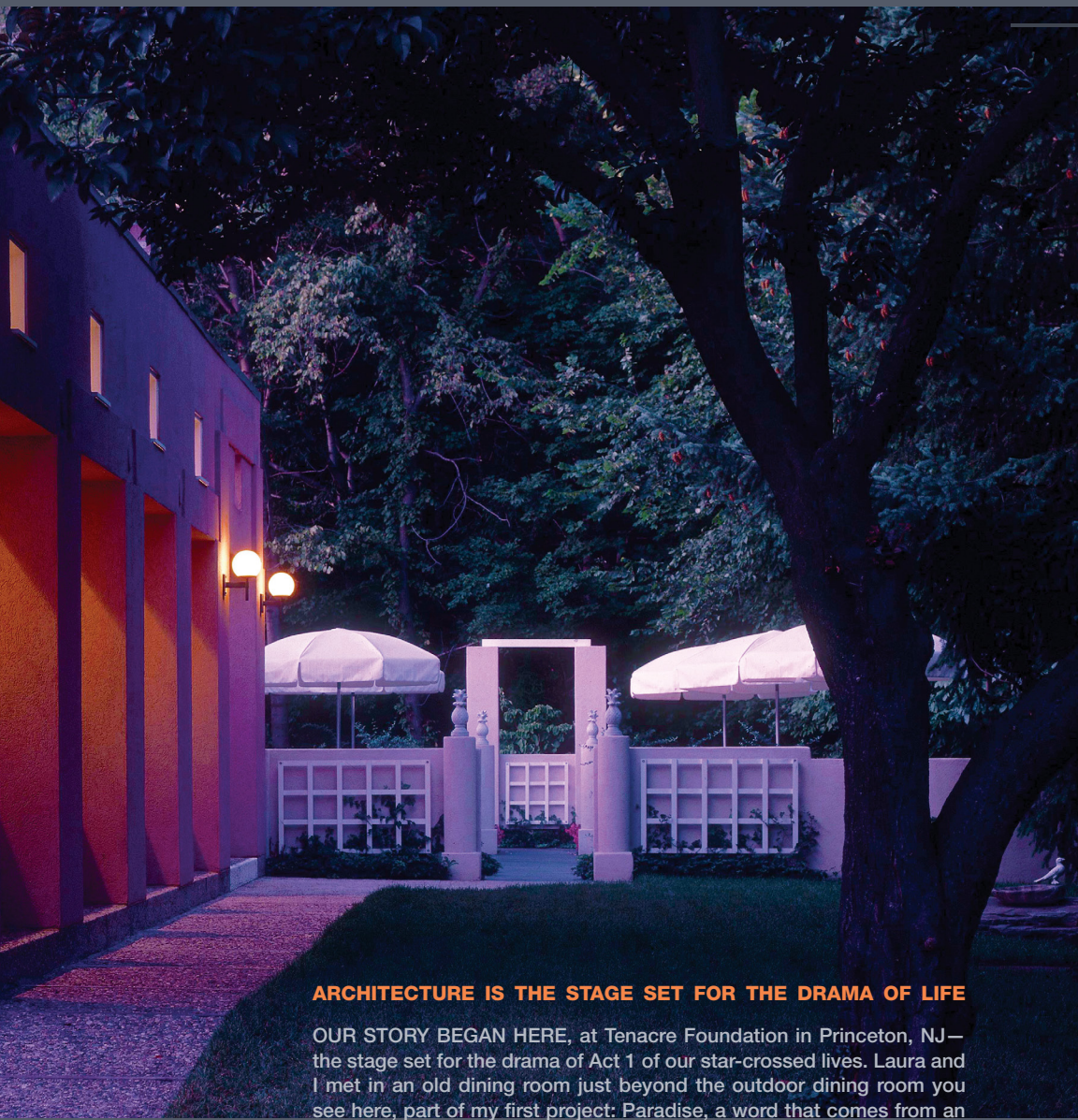
Laura and I began our story in 1982—in Princeton, NJ, at Tenacre Foundation, near the site of my first project, pictured on the next two pages.

A Cafeteria and Garden, code name Paradise, the project was part of the Act 1 stage set for the drama of our shared world for the first 8 years of our 35-year friendship. In Act 3, the last three years of Laura's life, our friendship turned to love. Together at last, we hoped to get married and build our Dream House, where we would stay young together and live for the rest of our lives. But for more than two of our three years, Laura struggled with cancer. Our tragic drama ended the week after Thanksgiving, in Sacramento, California, 2017.

Through the entire 35 years of our enduring friendship, I lived true to the spirit of my One Word Life Theme, Architecture, and Laura lived true to the spirit of hers, Nurse. We were there for each other when we needed help. Even to the very end . . . when, in an ironical plot twist, the architect took care of the nurse.

Laura deserved a better fate.

ME & LAURA, 1987. TENACRE FOUNDATION, PRINCETON, NJ. When I designed the building that you see us sitting in—a building called The Center—Laura worked part-time in my architecture office and made study models of the custom light fixtures not yet installed over the bare bulbs on the pilasters behind us.



ARCHITECTURE IS THE STAGE SET FOR THE DRAMA OF LIFE

OUR STORY BEGAN HERE, at Tenacre Foundation in Princeton, NJ—the stage set for the drama of Act 1 of our star-crossed lives. Laura and I met in an old dining room just beyond the outdoor dining room you see here, part of my first project: Paradise, a word that comes from an ancient Persian word that means "walled garden." Project Paradise also includes indoor dining: the building on the left, an employees' cafeteria. I started designing the project in 1982, the year I met Laura.

OUR STORY CONTINUED HERE

Brook House Studio (1986–1987), Princeton, NJ.

Sited on the bank of a brook, this one-room addition to a small cottage, which served for seven years as headquarters for my architecture practice, was my private office.

I loved the time I spent in that room . . . working around the clock.

The east wall, which you see here, represented me. It said, “I work here. This is how I think about architecture. Architecture is art.”

For the first time in a built project, I treated a wall as an expressive canvas. I evoked the brook that runs through the ravine and the smoke that billows from the cottage’s chimney. I titled this gray wall-canvas, “Gray Square, Brook, and Smoke.”

I conjure the contour of the brook on the left and the plume of smoke on the right. By contrast, I disrupt this personal representation of Nature by inserting into the composition a universal symbol of Culture: a square. I pay my respect to two famous squares, specifically: the painting“Black Square” (1915) by Kasmir Malevich and the front facade of Villa Schwob (1916) by Le Corbusier.

On this stucco chessboard, the White Knight of Geometry (Form) battles—poetically speaking—the Black Knight of Metaphor (Story). They unite to become the Silver Knight. Both sides win.

The last of three projects I designed that were built in Princeton for Tenacre Foundation, this east wall represented the culmination of my endeavors. At the time, my most significant creative act architecturally, it ushered me across the threshold from a derivative expression of architecture to an original expression of architecture.

Thanks to the creative support of friend and Tenacre President John Irby, I was able to finally assert clearly the artistic manifesto of my self-professed identity: The Architect Painter.

This stucco wall—an early expression of what I would years later call the Aesthetic & Symbolic Rectangle—paved the way for my next wall-as-canvas project, which I began working on some four years later: Dante|Telescope House.

And Laura worked here. She made study models, including ones for the wall lamps I designed—you can see the final product through the window.

COLUMN AND WALL

CHECKMATE: DANTE AND DAEDALUS | 9

VISUAL EFFECTS

ARCHITECTURE AND THE CHESS GAME OF FORM & STORY

MOVE & MEANING | FORM & STORY

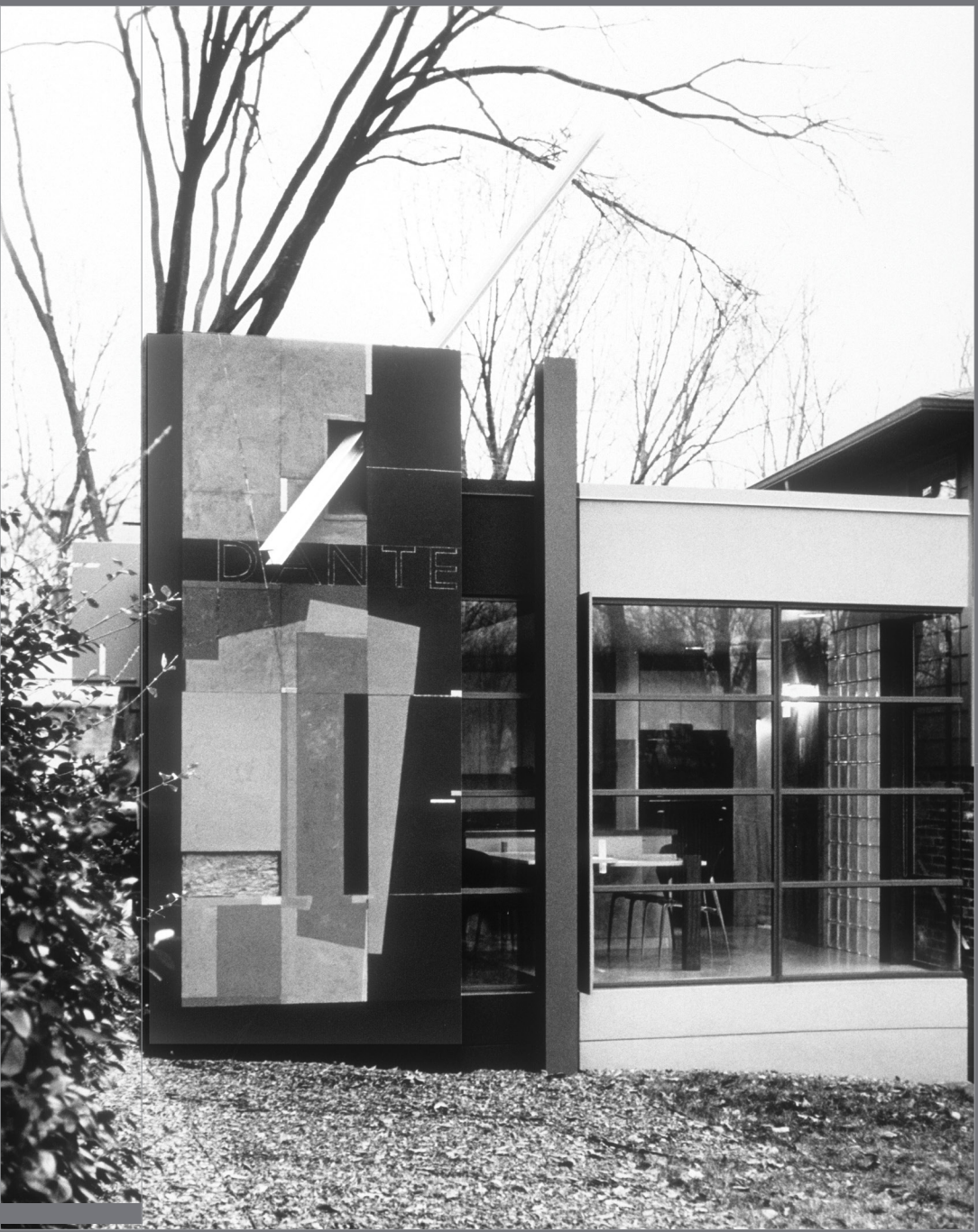
In Dante | Telescope House, I probe architecture's metaphysical structure. I seek fusion of the visible and invisible "to evoke the simultaneous presence of painting and architecture" (as architect-painter Theo van Doesburg put it in 1917) and to evoke the origins of architecture in literature and astronomy, signified by "Dante" and "Telescope." I reach back into architecture's past past when the first buildings were books, the first books were buildings, and the first architects—astronomer-priests—marked out sacred space for the observation of reality.

DANTE: *everlasting, enduring*

THE ARMIES OF FORM & STORY FIGHT THE WAR OF ART. THEY FIGHT FOR OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART.

JEREMY REYHILDNER

tapp


DANTE

THE ARMIES OF FORM & STORY FIGHT THE WAR OF ART. THEY FIGHT FOR OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART.

PREQUEL TO A TRILOGY

DANTE | TELESCOPE HOUSE

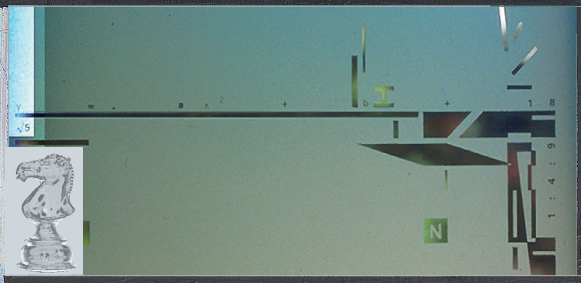
FORM & STORY MANIFESTO #1

The Dante|Telescope Monolith orients us to both the outer world, the North Star, and the inner world — the North Star of our being. The word *building* derives from an ancient Indo-European word that means "to be." Architecture is an ontological expression. An expression of our concept of the architecture of the world, providing a place *to be*, physically and metaphysically. *Dante* means "everlasting, enduring" . . . symbolizing the human quest for the North Star of Truth.

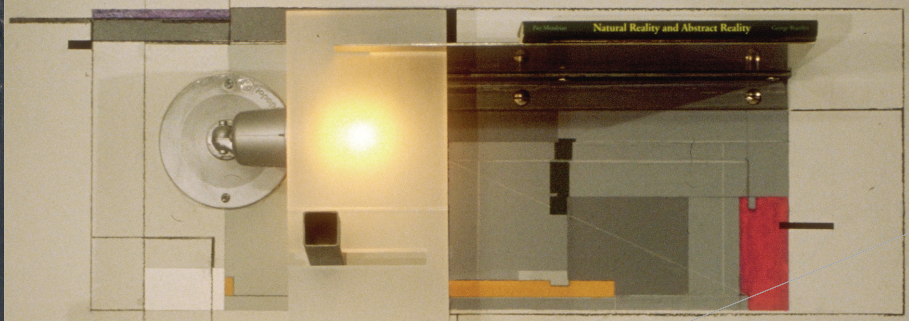
SILVER KNIGHT ARCHITECTURE IS A MOVIE—ideally, an artistic act of surpassing quality that scores high on the White Knight Index of Aesthetics and on the Black Knight Index of Symbolics: Move & Meaning. Form & Story. A screenplay written in the physical materials of construction and light and space—a building that represents the same thing as Robert McKee's definition of Story: "**a creative demonstration of truth**."

THE ARMIES OF FORM & STORY FIGHT THE WAR OF ART. THEY FIGHT FOR OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART.

DANTE | TELESCOPE HOUSE

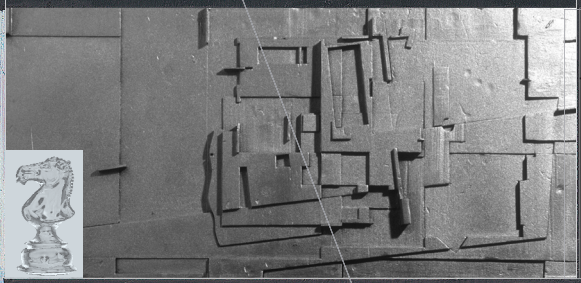


SILVER KNIGHT ARCHITECTURE



THE ARMIES OF FORM & STORY FIGHT THE WAR OF ART. THEY FIGHT FOR OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART.

DANTE | TELESCOPE HOUSE



THE PROBLEM IS TO EVOKE THE SIMULTANEOUS PRESENCE OF PAINTING AND ARCHITECTURE. —Theo van Doesburg | 1917

THE ARMIES OF FORM & STORY FIGHT THE WAR OF ART. THEY FIGHT FOR OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART.

DANTE | TELESCOPE HOUSE

The Black Knight of Story

PLAN / SITE PLAN MODEL : INSET IN THE DANTE | TELESCOPE MONOLITH

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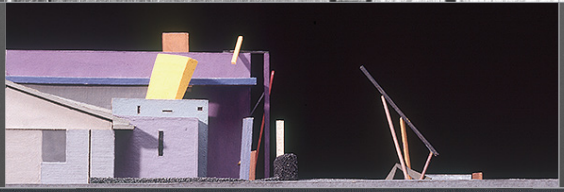
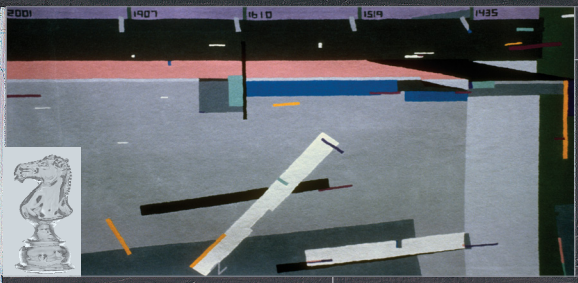
BSTRACT

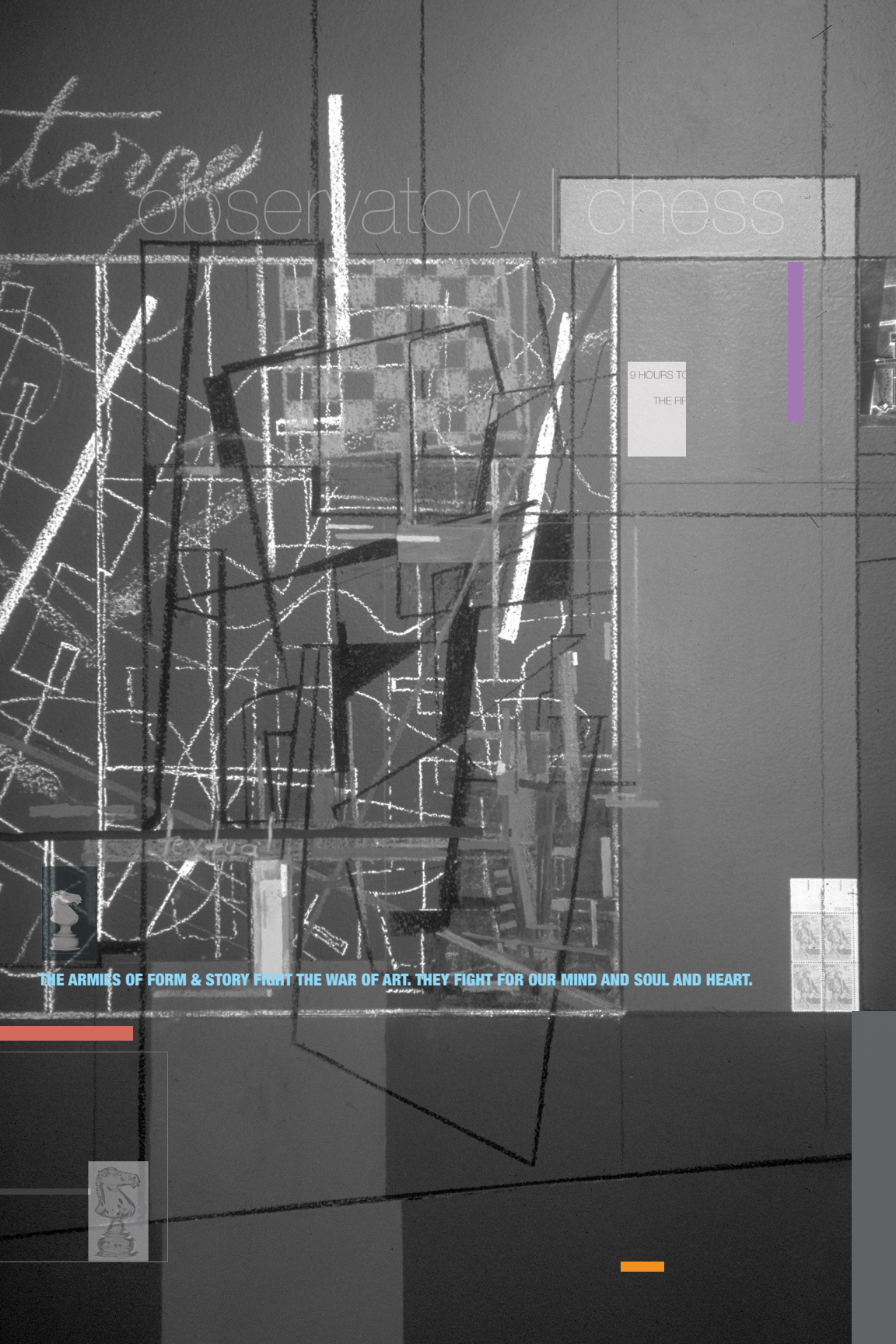


THE ARMIES OF FORM & STORY FIGHT THE WAR OF ART. THEY FIGHT FOR OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART.

DANTE | TELESCOPE HOUSE



SILVER KNIGHT ARCHITECTURE


observatory | chess
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THE ARMIES OF FORM & STORY FIGHT THE WAR OF ART. THEY FIGHT FOR OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART.

Observation
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PHOTOGRAPH © YUKIO FUTAGAWA I GA PHOTOGRAPHERS. *GA HOUSES #51*, 1997

DANTE | TELESCOPE HOUSE

SILVERKNIGHT

THE ARMIES OF FORM & STORY FIGHT THE WAR OF ART | THEY FIGHT FOR OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART

The steel-beam Telescope juts into the night sky toward the North Star

SILVER KNIGHT ARCHITECTURE

FIRST LIGHT

DANTE | TELESCOPE HOUSE

SILVERKNIGHT

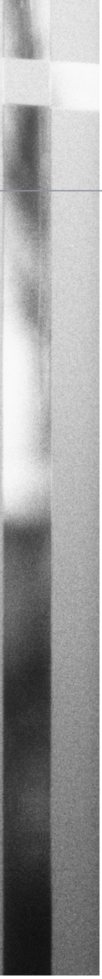
THE ARMIES OF FORM & STORY FIGHT THE WAR OF ART | THEY FIGHT FOR OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART

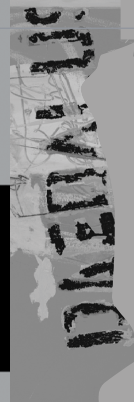
The steel-beam Telescope juts into the night sky toward the North Star

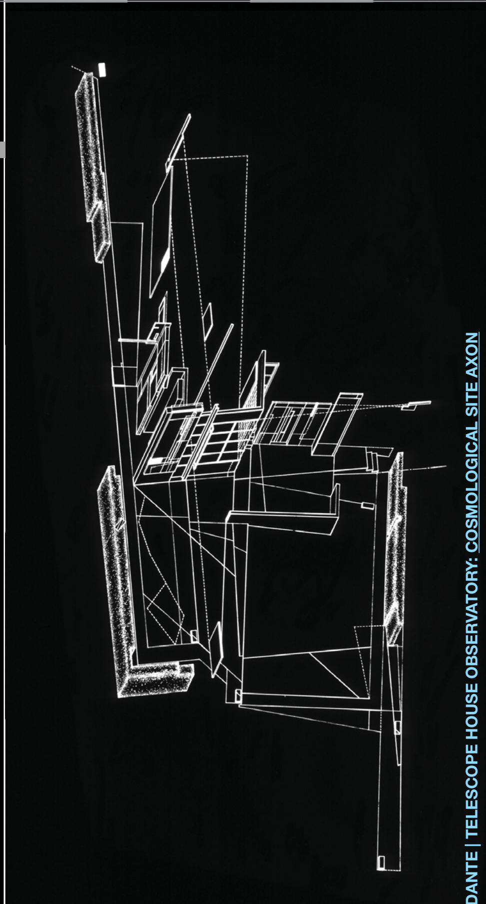
SILVER KNIGHT ARCHITECTURE

THE ARMIES OF FORM & STORY FIGHT THE WAR OF ART. THEY FIGHT FOR OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART.

FIGURAL VOID





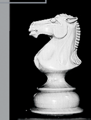


DANTE | TELESCOPE HOUSE OBSERVATORY: COSMOLOGICAL SITE AXON

2023

THE ARCHITECT PAINTER JEF7REY HILDNER PRESENTS A CINEMATIC FUSION OF FORM & STORY: ARCHITECTURE IS THE STAGE SET FOR THE DRAMA OF LIFE . . .
ARCHITECTURE IS A STORY TOLD THROUGH A BUILDING. ENTER SITE >

D A E D A L U S



“The road to safety will open first from where you least expect it.”
—Virgil,
The Aeneid

ARCHITECTURE IS A STORY TOLD THROUGH A BUILDING
ARCHITECTURE IS THE STAGE SET FOR THE DRAMA OF LIFE

ARCHITECTURE IS THE WORLD IN A BUILDING.

FACADE AND SITE PLAN

THE DAEDALUS PROJECT
THE HERO'S JOURNEY HOUSE

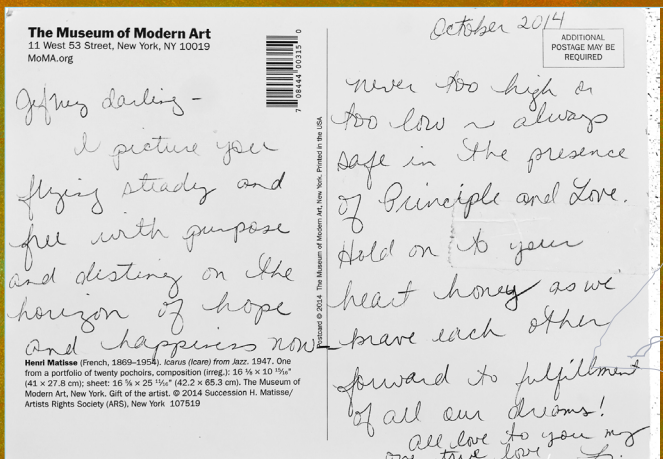
FLIGHT MASTER

Daedalus murdered his sister's son Talus.
Envy of the nephew's talents spurred
Daedalus's monstrous crime.
King of Athens, the city his grandfather
Erechtheus built,
Fallen Daedalus fled to Crete for solace.

Who are you, single-hearted Daedalus?
Craftsman for Queen Pasiphaë's desire,
Designer for King Minos's wrath,
Rescuer of their daughter Ariadne's heart:
So her Theseus could slay the Minotaur,
You unspooled the secret of your Labyrinth.

How shall I know you, King Daedalus?
Creator of wings, spinner of yarns, architect,
Thought-hero of thunderous imagination,
Brave truth-seeker of art, beyond time.
Or simply as you know yourself?
Sad father who lost dear Icarus to the sun.

October 2014. Jef7rey darling — I picture you flying steady and free with purpose and destiny on the horizon of hope and happiness now — never too high or too low — always safe in the presence of Principle and Love. Hold on to your heart honey as we brave each other to fulfillment of all our dreams! All love to you my one true love L.



POSTCARD FROM LAURA (lower left)—layered over my painting *Flight Master*.

On the front of Laura's postcard: Henri Matisse's *Icarus (Icare) from Jazz*, 1947. Laura sent me this card because she knew how much I love Matisse and Greek mythology, especially the symbolic story of architect Daedalus and his son, Icarus. Daedalus made wings for himself and Icarus to escape their imprisonment in a tower located in the center of the labyrinth that Daedalus designed for King Minos to cage the monster Minotaur. But Daedalus made wings of wax and cautioned Icarus to not fly too close to the sun. Icarus ignored the warning, flew too close, his wings melted, and he fell to his death in the sea.

How could Laura foresee that little more than three years after sending me her postcard, she herself would fall Icarus-like to the sea.

And I would fall too, in my heart.

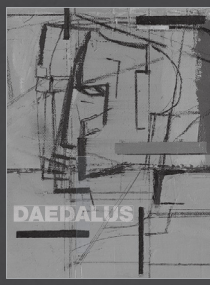
FLIGHT MASTER | 2010, Oil on canvas, 62 x 93 in.

DAEDALUS FELL FROM GRACE

DAEDALUS

MY HERALD CALL HAIKU | 3 LINES : 17 SYLLABLES

ARCHITECT THE TALE
5 SYLLABLES



OF HERO DAEDALUS'S TREK—
7 SYLLABLES

THEN WINGED INTO SPACE . . .

TIMELESS VISION QUEST
5 SYLLABLES

"[Daedalus] is the hero of the way of thought—singlehearted, courageous, and full of faith that the truth, as he finds it, shall make us free.
And so now we may turn to him, as did Ariadne. The flax for the linen of his thread he has gathered from the fields of the human imagination."

—Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*

"[Daedalus] is the hero of the way of thought—singlehearted, courageous, and full of faith that the truth, as he finds it, shall make us free. An
—Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*

Daedalus #1, 2018. Study #4, 36 x 64 in. (9:16). *The Daedalus Series I The Labyrinth, The Rectangle, and The Knight*

d so now we may turn to him, as did Ariadne. The flax for the linen of his thread he has gathered from the fields of the human imagination."
"LET EVERYTHING HAPPEN TO YOU. BEAUTY AND TERROR. JUST KEEP GOING. NO FEELING IS FINAL."
—Rainer Maria Rilke

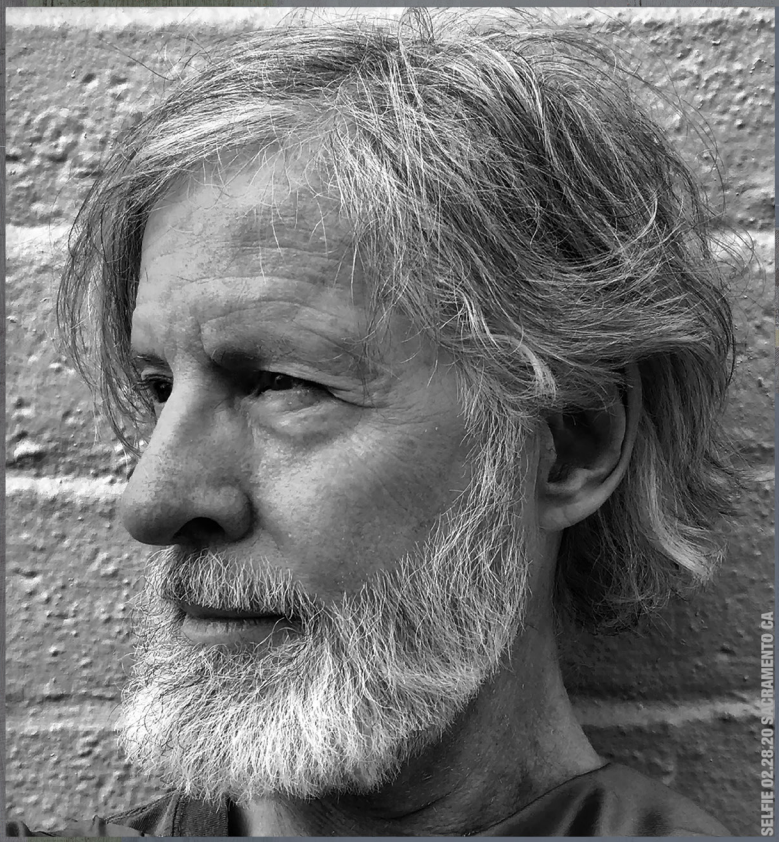
VISUAL EF

VISUAL EF9ECTS

ARCHITECTURE AND THE CHESS GAME OF FORM & STORY

JEFF 7 REY

HILDNER



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VISUAL EF9ECTS

ARCHITECTURE AND THE CHESS GAME OF FORM & STORY

THE ARCHITECT PAINTER PRESS

tapp

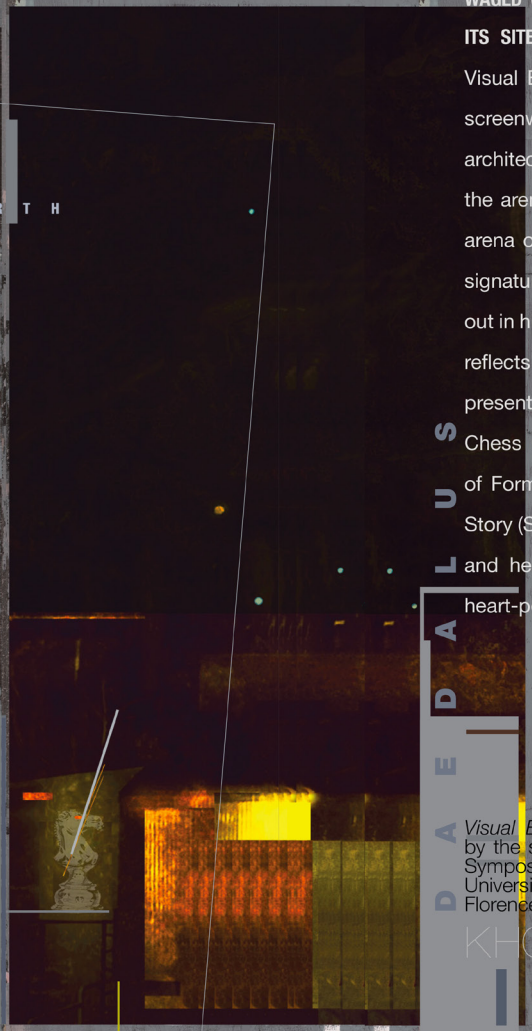
VISUAL EF9ECTS

ARCHITECTURE AND THE CHESS GAME OF FORM & STORY

ARCHITECT JEF7REY HILDNER turns again to the cinematic metaphor of chess to bring his theory of architecture to life.

JEF7REY HILDNER

"ARCHITECTURE IS A CHESS GAME OF FORM & STORY WAGED ON THE BATTLEFIELD OF A BUILDING AND ITS SITE," Hildner proclaims in his 9-point Visual Ef9ects Manifesto. An award-winning screenwriter as well as an award-winning architect, Hildner transposes insights from the arena of story architecture to his parallel arena of building architecture, expanding on signature themes and concepts that he laid out in his book *Daedalus 9*. *VISUAL EF9ECTS* reflects his quest to design buildings that present a creative demonstration of the Chess Game of Art, where the White Army of Form (Aesthetics) and the Black Army of Story (Symbolics) battle for our mind and soul and heart—Form & Story fight to create a heart-pounding work of art.



DAEDALUS

Build beautiful.
BUILD THE TRUTH.

Visual Ef9ects springs from the author's talk by the same title that he gave in 2016 for the Symposium on Formalism at the Syracuse University School of Architecture Program in Florence.

KHQ7

DAEDALUS | THE SILVER KNIGHT

FOR LAURA

THE ARMIES OF FORM & STORY FIGHT THE WAR OF ART. THEY FIGHT FOR OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART.

“Laura Dawn Middleton: Room 5, Sea Ranch Lodge | View Of Bihler Point,” 04.26.2017 8:06 pm

LAURA DAWN MIDDLETON | TWILIGHT HORIZONS. The Sea Ranch, CA, April 26, 2017. Here in Room 5 at Sea Ranch Lodge, our favorite place to go, Laura gazes through our window to the view at dusk of the Pacific Ocean and craggy grass covered Bihler Point, which juts out high above the surf. Always our ultimate destination, Bihler Point beckoned us time and again from Sacramento, and we would trek to the edge of the cliff then sit bundled up from head to toe on Our Rock: the concrete elliptic cylinder with an oxidized-bronze “1876 Bihler Point” Geodetic Survey Marker. And we would thrill to the roar of the ocean . . . and brave the wind . . . and hold hands and pray . . . hug each other tight . . . and listen . . . listen . . . listen . . . and hope.

We bring to our grief the architecture of ourselves.

Slate 7

EPILOGUE: KNIGHT MOVES KHQ | Δ

DUET | 1994–1997. 54 x 54 in.

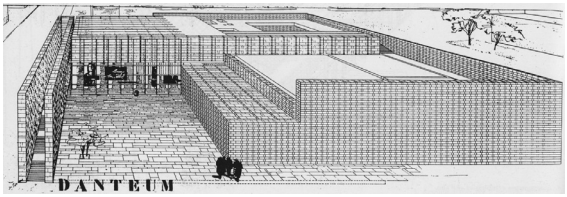
PART 1 | RICHARD ROSA, 1994

House paint on canvas + graphite, chalk, oil pastel, and satin marine varnish

PART 2 | JEF7REY HILDNER, 1997

Oil on pre-painted canvas + graphite, grease pencil, pasted paper | sheet lead & nails

K N I G H T M O V E S



TRIBUTE TO GIUSEPPE TERRAGNI — The architect whose unbuilt project in Rome in 1938 has guided me along my road-less-traveled architecture quest. Terragni's DANTEUM, which tells the three-act story of Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy* (1308-1320) and recalls the ancient origins of architecture, when the first buildings were books and the first books were buildings, is the modern architecture North Star of FORM & STORY.

TRIBUTE TO LE CORBUSIER — Role model of The Architect Painter and philosopher-poet who sparked my quest, many years ago, in the spring of my second year at Princeton. Le Corbusier's PALACE OF ASSEMBLY (Chandigarh, India, 1955), an expression of symbolic content less narrative than FORM & STORY, is the modern architecture North Star of MOVE & MEANING.

TWIN NORTH STARS. Together these concepts that I term MOVE & MEANING and FORM & STORY guide me toward my goal: a creative demonstration of the Chess Game of Architecture . . . the Chess Game of Art.

DANTE | TELESCOPE HOUSE / 1991–1996. PHOTOGRAPH © YUKIO FUTAGAWA | **GLOBAL ARCHITECTURE HOUSES** 51, 1997

A shard of ancient suns — the steel-beam Telescope of the Dante|Telescope Monolith sights the North Star . . .

AKA THE ZLOWE HOUSE

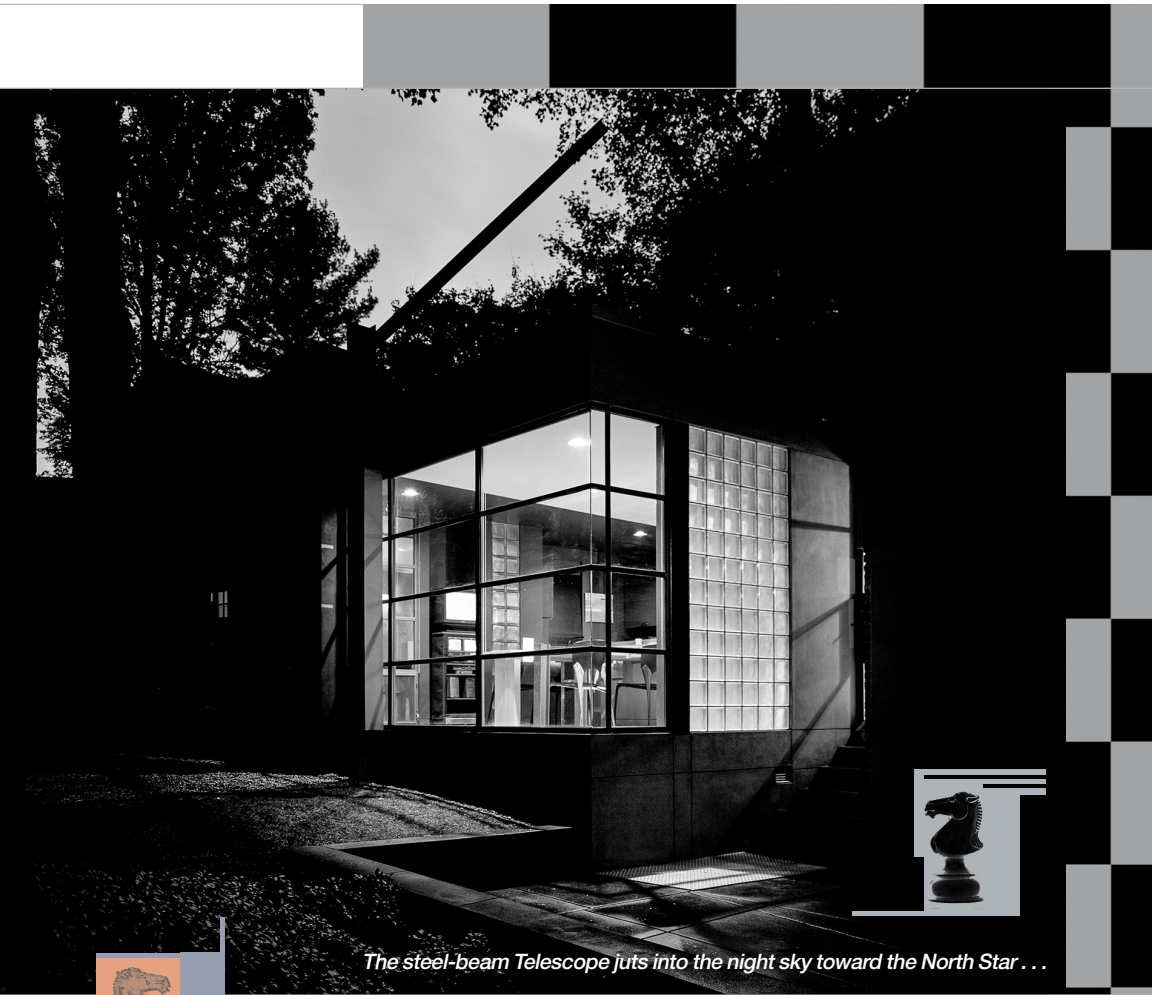
ARCHITECT, PAINTER, AND WRITER
JEF7REY HILDNER
launched The Architect Painter Press in 2005 under the banner "Live Brave."

The Architect Painter Press presents Hildner's buildings, paintings, and insights—work that reflects his focus on the visible and invisible architecture of art and life. The Architect Painter Press also seeks to present the work of other artists. Current titles range from Hildner's books *Visual Ef9ects*, *Daedalus 9*, *Henry Trucks — Painter*, *Picasso Lessons*, and *Garches 1234* to his books *Live Brave* and *Metaphysical Warrior*. His work also appears in many other venues—for example, *Journal of Architectural Education*, *ANY*, *Oz*, *IMDb*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *Architectural Record*, and *Global Architecture Houses*. The book *Architectural Formalism*, by Hakan Anay, features Hildner's iconic essay "Formalism: Move|Meaning" alongside essays by renowned theorists Rosalind Krauss, Peggy Deamer, Robert Slutzky, and Colin Rowe. Hildner received an Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture award for Excellence in Teaching. Dante|Telescope House won the New Jersey Chapter of The American Institute of Architects "Blue Ribbon Award for Excellence in Design." Jef7rey sometimes paints under the name Henry Trucks and writes under the names Madison Gray, Eliot Plum, and Michelangelo A. Roland Slate. His one-word life theme—architecture—shapes his quest, his outlook, and his output, including his work as a screenwriter and story architect. He earned his undergraduate degree and professional Master of Architecture degree from Princeton University.

KNIGHTMOVES
THE SILVER KNIGHT OF FORM & STORY

thearchitectpainter.com

| "The problem is to evoke the simultaneous presence of painting and architecture." —Theo van Doesburg | 1917



The steel-beam Telescope juts into the night sky toward the North Star . . .

DANTE | TELESCOPE HOUSE 1991–1996. PHOTOGRAPH © YUKIO FUTAGAWA | GLOBAL ARCHITECTURE HOUSES 51, 1997

| THE ARMIES OF FORM & STORY FIGHT THE WAR OF ART | THEY FIGHT FOR OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART

K N I G H T M O V E S

ARCHITECTURE IS A CHESS GAME OF FORM & STORY
PLAYED ON THE AESTHETIC & SYMBOLIC RECTANGLE OF ART

JUST. LIKE. A. MOVIE.

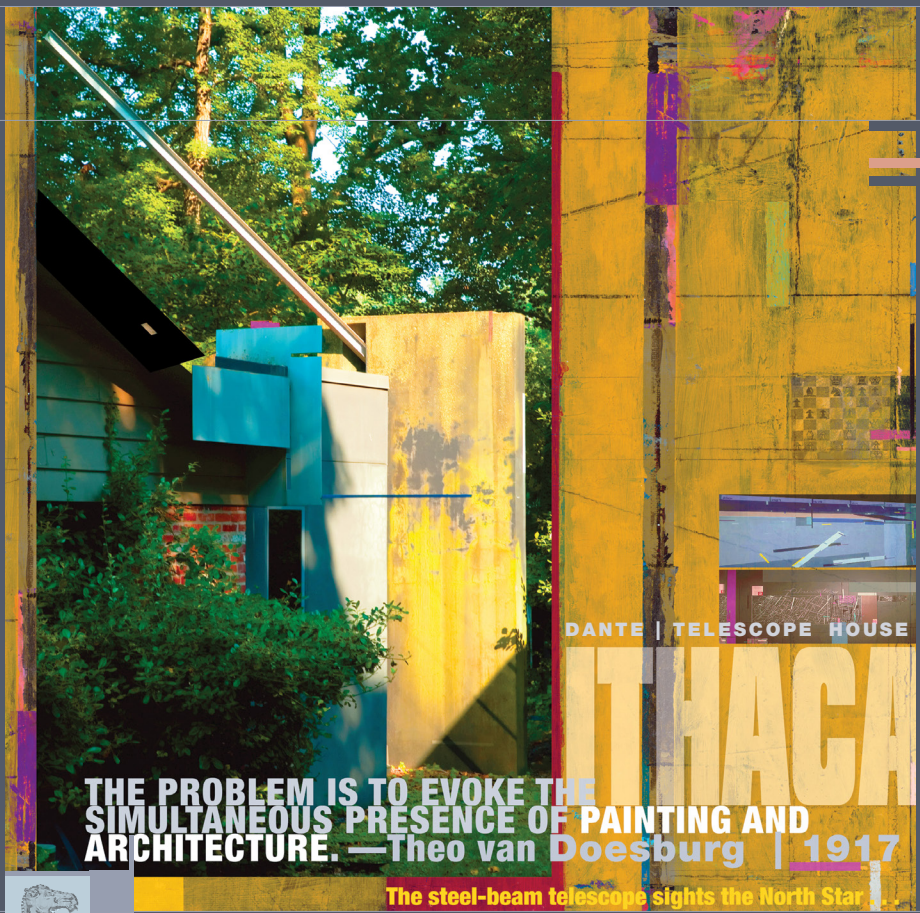
© Svensk Filmindustri (SF). *The Seventh Seal*, 1957

D A E D A L U S

ARCHITECTURE IS THE STAGE SET FOR THE DRAMA OF LIFE –
THE DRAMA OF LIFE AND DEATH

ARCHITECTURE IS A STORY TOLD THROUGH A BUILDING

THE WHITE KNIGHT OF FORM + THE BLACK KNIGHT OF STORY =
THE SILVER KNIGHT OF FORM & STORY | MY AVATAR


DANTE | TELESCOPE HOUSE
ITHACA
THE PROBLEM IS TO EVOKE THE SIMULTANEOUS PRESENCE OF PAINTING AND ARCHITECTURE. —Theo van Doesburg | 1917
The steel-beam telescope sights the North Star . . .

LAURA STANDS IN FRONT OF THE EAMES HOUSE IN PACIFIC PALISADES, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA. MAY 6, 2017

LOVE

THE ARCHITECT PAINTER

SILVERKNIGHTARCHITECTURE

KnightHeadQuarters

"All art tends towards structuring the contradiction between t
between form and meaning."

—Robert Slutzky, "Re-Reading Phenomenal Transparency"

JEFF REY HILDNER

Architecture is a vision quest. A rite of passage from the ordinary to the extraordinary— a brave reimagination of the world.

MIND & MATTER

[ARCHITECTURE AND THE CHESS GAME OF FORM & STORY]

ARCHITECTURE IS A SILVER COIN

Inscribed on one side,

FORM

"WE BRING TO OUR PROJECTS THE ARCHITECTURE OF OURSELVES."
—MIKHAIL BAKHTIN

ARCHITECTURE IS THE STAGE SET FOR THE DRAMA OF LIFE.

Inscribed on the other side,

9. FORM & STORY

STORY

ARCHITECTURE IS A STORY TOLD THROUGH A BUILDING.

"I DRAW NO DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE CONSTRUCTION OF A BOOK AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF A PAINTING."
—HENRI MATISSE

VISUAL EF9ECTS

ARCHITECT, PAINTER, AND WRITER
JEF7REY HILDNER

that which appears and that which signifies,

FORM & STORY

D|
DANTE|
DAEDALUS|
HILDNER|

I.AM.DAEDALUS.

Legendary first architect, descendent of Greek myth, inventor of the labyrinth and wings.

One of countless reincarnations of Daedalus since time began.

Trapped in a labyrinth that I myself devised.

Summoning, as best I can, escape capacity through wings of serendipity and creativity . . .

My name is DAEDALUS.

And I am a Workaholic.

A member of WA: Workaholics Anonymous.

More lucky in work than love.

My work does not betray me.

Reject me.

Leave me.

Cause me heartbreak and grief.

Die.

My work lifts me up.

Will never hurt me.

Or desert me.

I.AM.DAEDALUS.

And I am Theseus, Daedalus's alter-ego, an ancient-medieval-modern Silver Knight—

somehow shielding and swording my way through the labyrinth to the light

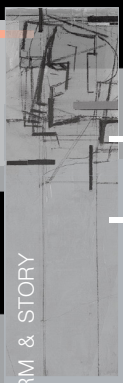
while also soaring like Daedalus above the labyrinth to worlds beyond the horizon of this earthly plight.

I hope.

LIVE BRAVE.

"THE THING IS, DON'T BE AFRAID."
—Laura Middleton

"GREAT MUSICIANS ARE LIKE GREAT FIGHTERS. THEY HAVE A HIGHER SENSE OF THEORY GOING ON IN THEIR HEADS."
—MILES DAVIS



7

THE SILVER KNIGHT OF FORM & STORY

MY AVATAR

Filmmaker Sergei Eisenstein said in *Film Form* that "the basis of every art is conflict." In the Chess Game of Art, the White Army of Form (Aesthetics: Chess Moves) and the Black Army of Story (Symbolics: Chess Meaning) wage "collaborative conflict," battling for the eyes of the viewer and the soul of the viewer, the heart of the viewer, fighting to activate in us an entire universe of emotions.

PREQUEL TO A TRILOGY

D A N T E | T E L E S C O P E H O U S E

FORM & STORY
MANIFESTO 1
1 9 9 1 – 1 9 9 6

THE DAEDALUS PROJECT
A T R I L O G Y

THE HERO'S JOURNEY HOUSE t h e h e r o s j o u r n e y h o u s e . c o m	PART 1 | 2017–
FLIGHT MASTER	PART 2 | FUTURE
DAEDALUS'S RETURN	PART 3 | FUTURE

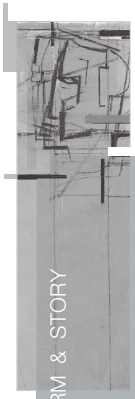
VISUAL EF9ECTS

ARCHITECTURE AND THE CHESS GAME OF FORM & STORY

ARCHITECTURE IS A CHESS GAME OF FORM & STORY WAGED ON THE BATTLEFIELD OF A BUILDING AND ITS SITE

The White Army of FORM cries,
"ARCHITECTURE IS THE STAGE SET FOR THE DRAMA OF LIFE."

The Black Army of STORY cries,
"ARCHITECTURE IS A STORY TOLD THROUGH A BUILDING."



THE SILVER KNIGHT OF FORM & STORY

MY AVATAR

VARIATION ON THE BLURB ON THE FRONT FLAP OF THE DUST JACKET

IN VISUAL EF9ECTS, ARCHITECT JEF7REY HILDNER BUILDS ON SIGNATURE THEMES AND CONCEPTS THAT HE LAID OUT IN HIS BOOK *DAEDALUS 9*, TURNING AGAIN TO THE CINEMATIC METAPHOR OF CHESS TO BRING HIS THEORY OF ARCHITECTURE TO LIFE. AN AWARD-WINNING SCREENWRITER AS WELL AS AN AWARD-WINNING ARCHITECT, HILDNER TRANSPOSES INSIGHTS FROM THE ARENA OF STORY ARCHITECTURE TO HIS PARALLEL ARENA OF BUILDING ARCHITECTURE. *VISUAL EF9ECTS* REFLECTS HIS QUEST TO DESIGN BUILDINGS THAT PRESENT A CREATIVE DEMONSTRATION OF THE CHESS GAME OF ART, WHERE THE WHITE ARMY OF FORM (AESTHETICS) AND THE BLACK ARMY OF STORY (SYMBOLICS) BATTLE FOR OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART—FORM & STORY FIGHT TO CREATE A HEART-POUNDING WORK OF ART.

VISUAL EF9ECTS — starring . . .

SPOILER ALERT. Unlike a movie, a book doesn't get a follow-up Blu-ray disk with special features. An author doesn't get a commentary track where they can spell out for readers what the book leaves unsaid—namely, the subtext. The author has to hope that discerning readers will piece together the story puzzle the author has crafted just below the surface. Since I don't get a follow-up, I'm going to give you a short author's comment about *Visual Ef9ects* here in the book itself.

I've assembled for this book a cast of original characters to tell the story of what I call the Chess Game of Architecture. And two of the characters costar in the leading roles.

But in case you missed it, this book is a love story, masquerading as a treatise on architecture. Well, "masquerading" isn't quite right, because this book is a treatise on architecture. But I guess what I'm trying to say is that what this book is really about is it's about love.

The One Word Theme of *Visual Ef9ects* is chess. Chess as a metaphor for art, starring the White Knight & Black Knight in a struggle between Form and Story, Aesthetics and Symbolics, Beauty and Truth. But chess also serves in this book as a metaphor for life, for the chess game between Head and Heart—between Architectural Theory and Human Emotions. On the chessboard of this book, Architectural Theory is the King—by rank, the most important chess piece. But Love is the Queen—the most powerful chess piece. Love runs this show. Love for buildings and paintings and pages, form, story, imagination, wonder, adventure, creativity, and drama, the realm of the verbal and the visual. Passionate love. Love of work. But also, love for another human being. Lost love. True love. Heartbreak and the hope for a brighter tomorrow. For both romantic leads. This book is about the architecture of the heart.

The last lines of Horton Foot's screenplay for *Tender Mercies* have stayed with me since I first saw the movie 35 years ago. "I don't trust happiness," says Foote's resilient protagonist, Mac Sledge. "I never did, I never will." Horton Foote, who I had the pleasure of interviewing and photographing for a feature article in *The Christian Science Journal* just before he passed away, gave his symbolic story an ironic ending. Neither happy nor sad, simply true. Because life is like that. Mercies don't always feel so tender. I don't know whether I do or don't trust happiness. What I do know is that over the past four years, my life has swung violently between happiness and sorrow.

And no more so than during my work on this book.

This book is a buddy film, like *48 Hours* and *Thelma & Louise*, and *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*. Two characters in leading roles, best friends, and also, like in *Casablanca* (my favorite movie) and *Out of Africa* (Laura's favorite movie), lovers.

In case you haven't figured it out yet, *Visual Ef9ects* is a love story starring Laura and the Silver Knight. The gender-neutral Silver Knight of Form & Story. And in case you need another hint? The Silver Knight is me (I know, "I"). Every artist can choose to be a Silver Knight. But I'm the lucky son of a gun who somehow became the Knight in Shining Armor in the eyes of the fabulous Laura Dawn Middleton, Writer.

LAURA AT SEA RANCH LODGE, MAY10, 2015

THE MIDDLETON MEMORIAL WILL CALL TO MIND THE PACIFIC COASTLINE AND "OUR ROCK" ON THE CRAGGY BLUFF OF BIHLER POINT, BEYOND SEA RANCH LODGE, THE SEA RANCH, CA

KHQ

THE SILVER KNIGHT OF FORM & STORY

7

MY AVATAR

THE ARCHITECT PAINTER

"FORESEE THE FUTURE"
—Delphic maxim inscribed on one of the 38 columns at the Temple of Apollo at Delphi in ancient Greece

Laura loved to walk through the three cemeteries across the street from our house in Sacramento, California— Old City Cemetery, Odd Fellows, and the one in-between: MASONIC LAWN. > >

Masonic Lawn will be the site of **LIVE B.R.A.V.E. | The Middleton Memorial**.

I took this photo, looking south, on Thursday, June 21, 2018, the first day of summer. > >

LIVE B.R.A.V.E.

I write about Laura and me, our story, my broken heart, and I honor Laura's life — in my book *LIVE BRAVE: A Tribute To Laura Middleton*.

When I took the photo, I thought that the memorial could be at the end of the retaining wall on the left, in the space where I've drawn a translucent horizontal rectangle. But that space has been claimed. So the site of Laura's memorial will be in the back right corner, along the right edge of the photo, the western edge of Masonic Lawn, where I've drawn a terra-cotta rectangle.

I foresee the memorial as the stage set for the symbolic drama of Laura's mortal transit and the drama of memory and love.

BUILD B.R.A.V.E.

MASONIC LAWN CEMETERY | SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA: VIEW LOOKING SOUTH

The site of **LIVE B.R.A.V.E. | The Middleton Memorial.** To see the video I shot as I walked the site on June 21, 2018, the first day of summer—go to: archive.org/details/LiveBrave

To see the memorial—go to: archive.org/details/Jef7reyHildnerArchitect-Buildings-LBTMM

FOR MY STAR-CROSSED MUSE: LIVE BRAVE | BOOK & BUILDING

LIVE BRAVE: A Tribute To Laura Middleton features the memorial tribute that I wrote for Laura—my steadfast friend of 35 years and my partner for the last 3½ years of her life—on April 1, 2018, Easter Sunday. I titled my tribute "Live Brave" and started writing at the stroke of midnight. I wrote till the sun came up.

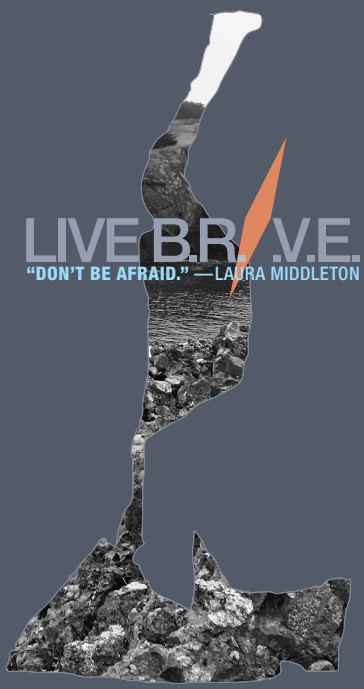
I first posted "Live Brave" on the Facebook page "Celebration of Laura Middleton," where family and friends can share their memories, grief, and love.

To more fully and enduringly honor Laura's human life and immortal spirit, I present "Live Brave" between the covers of a book. The book, which includes additional commentary and photos, also serves as a threshold to another tribute to Laura that I hope to create—a building: an architectural monument. I've given it a name—

LIVE B.R.A.V.E. | The Middleton Memorial

There was a time, at the dawn of architecture and writing, before the invention of paper in China around 100 BC, when a building and a book were the same. Ancient Egyptians wrote their ideas about life and science and art on the walls and columns of their buildings. Ancient Greeks wrote on the walls and columns of their buildings too. And like ancient Egyptians, ancient Greeks did so to honor a dimension of human life and eternity that they viewed as essential and a manifestation of divine power: Memory.

Ancient Greeks knew: Through inscribed walls and columns of text, through dual coding of the Visual and the Verbal, architecture represents *resistance to forgetfulness*, giving tangible earthly form to the goddess of Memory—and still today, through *monuments* and *memorials*, by walls that do not remain silent, architecture signals the presence of Memory, God, the presence of Mind.



The Middleton Memorial will evoke the origins of book and building—origins infused with the philosophical and pragmatic purpose to *keep in mind* what we deem sacred: *Remember* who we love.

I envision LIVE B.R.A.V.E. | The Middleton Memorial as a deeply personal expression of the concepts I lay out in *Visual Ef9ects*: a Silver Knight Architecture of Form & Story that reflects my love for Laura, her love for me—our love story—and remembers star-crossed lovers throughout space and time . . .

In the face of archetypal inner and outer resistance that I've learned accompanies every worthy endeavor, I hear Laura encouraging me, "Darling, build your love letter in stone, composed of pure light and laced with sorrow, hope, and life. Build Brave."

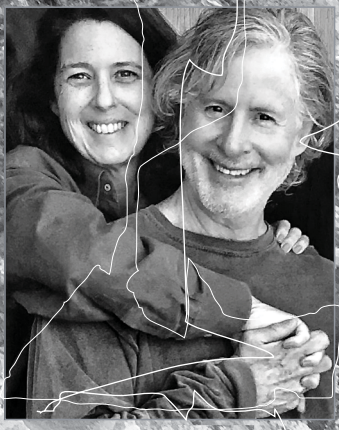
Build the truth.

F O R M & S T O R Y

PHOTO: OUR ROCK ON BIHLER POINT. THE SEA RANCH, CA. VIEW NORTH. I took this photo of "Our Rock"—the concrete elliptic cylinder (embedded with a US Geodetic Survey Marker: "1876 Bihler Point") atop the bluff—September 27, 2018, one year after Laura and I sat there together for the last time
INSET: LAURA & ME. SACRAMENTO, CA. OCTOBER 22, 2017. 38 DAYS BEFORE LAURA'S DEPARTURE

WE BRING TO OUR ARCHITECTURE THE FORMS & STORIES OF OUR LIVES

OUR ROCK



THE LAURA EFFECT

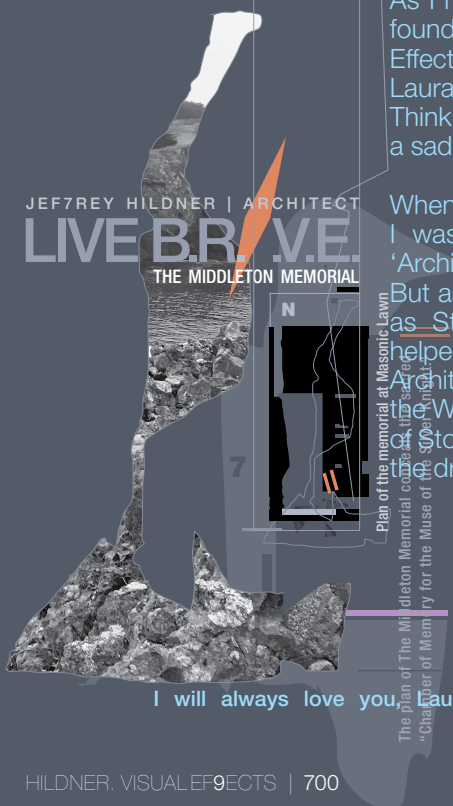
"Architecture is a chess game of Form & Story waged on the battlefield of a building and its site," I proclaim as the anthem of this book. The White Army of Form cries, "Architecture is the stage set for the drama of life." The Black Army of Story cries, "Architecture is a story told through a building." The armies of Form & Story fight the War of Art. They fight for our mind and soul and heart.

Especially our heart.

To illustrate the theme of Form & Story, I weave through this book my personal story of star-crossed love. During every tick of the clock, as I worked on this book, I could feel Laura with me, my life of work & love blending serendipitously but painfully on page after page. I could feel Laura helping me channel my grief into art.

As I neared the book's completion, I once again found myself startled by the power of The Laura Effect—the creative influence of my lost love, Laura Middleton, encouraging me to Feel Brave. Think Brave. Act Brave. The Laura Effect led me to a sad epiphany.

When I started the book, I was sure of my lines. I was sure, "The White Army of Form cries, 'Architecture is the stage set for the drama of life.' But as I confess in the last chapter, "Architecture as Stage Set—a Frame of Reference," Laura helped me see the truth: "In the Chess Game of Architecture, the Chess Game of Form & Story, the White Army of Form cries, and the Black Army of Story cries too, 'Architecture is the stage set for the drama of life and death.'"



I will always love you, Laura

BIHLER POINT, THE SEA RANCH, CA

BEFORE I COINED FORM & STORY, I COINED ITS CHESS-BASED TWIN

MOVE & MEANING

WHAT IS FORMALISM?
THE CONTROVERSIAL QUESTION I RESEARCHED FOR 10 YEARS—AND FIRST ANSWERED THIS WAY:
THE CHESS GAME OF MOVE & MEANING

What is Formalism?

Le Corbusier, *Towards a New Architecture* (1923): "Architecture is the masterly, correct and magnificent play of masses brought together in light."

Is it?

You can also read the following two essays about Formalism online. See https://archive.org/details/MoveMeaning

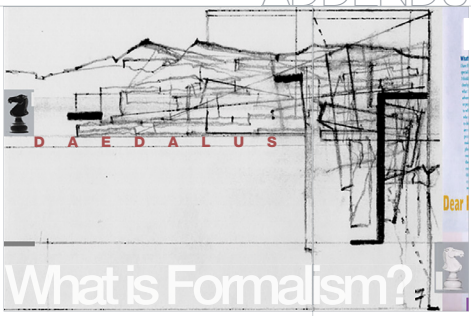
"A transcendent experience is one that takes you out of yourself and convinces you of a larger life or existence; in this sense, it means something close to 'spiritual.'" —*Merriam-Webster*

Does SIGNIFICANT ARCHITECTURE — Transcendent Architecture, resonating with Impact & Meaning — require more than the display of an architect's aesthetic mastery of Form? More than the display of a building's exquisite interplay of materials, space, and light?

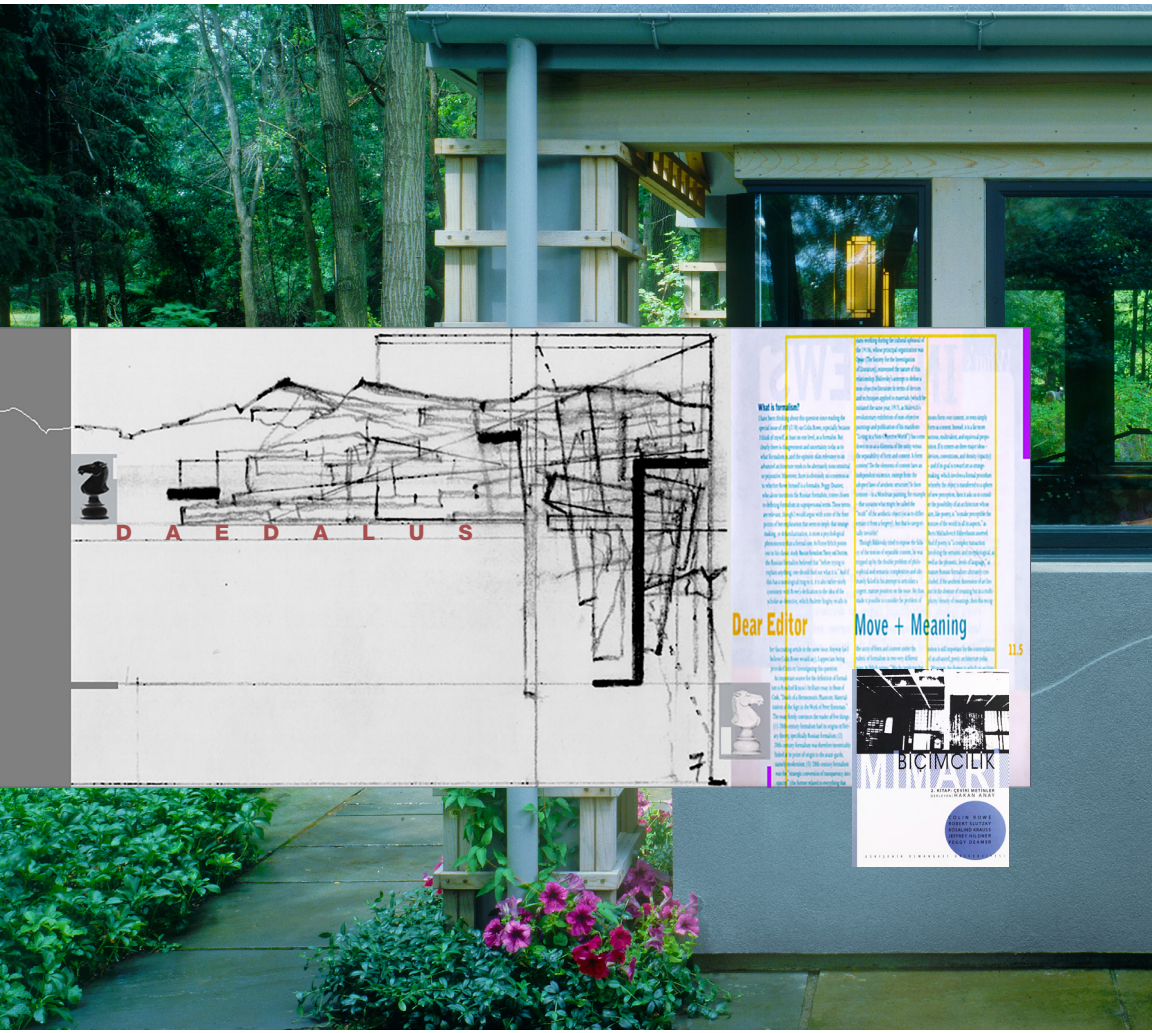
I raised this crucial question long before I created this book, *VISUAL Ef9ECTS*. In fact, I studied architecture and became an architect because I believe the answer is Yes. And I raised the question, if only implicitly, in two published essays about Formalism —early in my development as a writer, over 20 years ago, when I wrote more for architectural theory insiders than outsiders, more for an academic audience than a public audience.

For the first time, I present these two essays in one of my books.

ADDENDUM | MOVE & MEANING



What is Formalism?



PRINCETON STUDIO 1987 | “GRAY SQUARE, BROOK, AND SMOKE”

THE ARMIES OF FORM & STORY FIGHT THE WAR OF ART. THEY FIGHT FOR OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART.

FORMALISM: MOVE & MEANING | Part 1

ADDENDUM | MOVE & MEANING

What is Formalism?

ARCHITECTURE IS A STORY TOLD THROUGH A BUILDING

Dear Editor

What is formalism?

I have been thinking about this question since reading the special issue of *ANY* (7/8) on Colin Rowe, especially because I think of myself, at least on one level, as a formalist. But clearly there is disagreement and uncertainty today as to what formalism is, and the opinion of its relevance to an advanced architecture tends to be alternately noncommittal or pejorative. Moreover, there is obviously no consensus as to whether Rowe himself is a formalist. Peggy Deamer, who alone mentions the Russian formalists, comes closest to defining formalism in suprapersonal terms. These terms are relevant, though I would argue with some of the finer points of her explanation that seem to imply that strange-making, or defamiliarization, is more a psychological phenomenon than a formal one. As Victor Erlich points out in his classic study *Russian Formalism: Theory and Doctrine*, the Russian formalists believed that "before trying to explain anything, one should find out what it is." And if this has a tautological ring to it, it is also rather nicely consistent with Rowe's dedication to the idea of the scholar-as-detective, which Paulette Singley recalls in her fascinating article in the same issue. Anyway (as I believe Colin Rowe would say), I appreciate being provoked into re/investigating this question.

An important source for the definition of formalism is Rosalind Krauss's brilliant essay in *Houses of Cards*, "Death of a Hermeneutic Phantom: Materialization of the Sign in the Work of Peter Eisenman." The essay firmly convinces the reader of five things: (1) 20th-century formalism had its origins in literary theory, specifically Russian formalism; (2) 20th-century formalism was therefore inextricably linked at its point of origin to the avant-garde, namely modernism; (3) 20th-century formalism was the "strategic conversion of transparency into opacity" (the former related to everything that was not art and the latter to everything that was) and relied on a taxonomy of devices for defamiliarizing the artistic object; (4) Rowe, who stressed that architecture is a form of text and concerned himself (with Robert Slutzsky) with the issue of a false versus a true transparency, is a formalist/modernist; (5) given this and given the fact that Eisenman's House I and House II are paradigmatic examples of 20th-century formalism in architecture, formalism can't be all bad. Moreover, Krauss's identification of the transition from formalism to structuralism in Eisenman's work – "the dispersal of unities into a field of differences" – is significant, for it introduces the question: Irrespective of what formalism may actually turn out to be, once we do find out what it is, is it still relevant? That is, if "post-formalism" is now in, isn't formalism out? Can formalism really function today as an operative intellectual construct for an advanced architecture? I think yes.

If, as Alan Colquhoun writes, "the problem of architecture is part of a larger problem involving the whole notion of art," then the potential for meaningful formalist research in architecture is inexhaustible. It addresses the timeless problem of form and content – or, as is suggested by the chess analogy that fascinated both Victor Shklovsky and Ferdinand Saussure, the problem of move and meaning. Here, it is clear that the Russians working during the cultural upheaval of the 1910s, whose principal organization was *Opojaz* (The Society for the Investigation of Literature), reinvented the nature of this relationship. Shklovsky's attempt to define a non-objective literature in terms of devices and techniques applied to materials (which he initiated the same year, 1915, as Malevich's revolutionary exhibition of non-objective paintings and publication of his manifesto "Living in a Non-Objective World") has come down to us as a dilemma of the unity versus the separability of form and content. Is form content? Do the elements of content have an independent existence, exempt from the adopted laws of aesthetic structure? Is there content – in a Mondrian painting, for example – that sustains what might be called the "truth" of the aesthetic object (so as to differentiate it from a forgery), but that is categorically invisible?

Though Shklovsky tried to expose the fallacy of the notion of separable content, he was tripped up by the double problem of philosophical and semantic complexities and ultimately failed in his attempt to articulate a cogent, mature position on the issue. He thus made it possible to consider the problem of the unity of form and content under the rubric of formalism in two very different ways. As Erlich writes: "Was he implying that all that matters in art is form, or was he simply saying that everything in the work of art is necessarily formed, i.e., organized for an esthetic purpose?" I am currently more interested in the latter proposition – but, to the degree that the architectural equivalent of forgery is avoided, I do not reject the validity of the former. I am also trying to sort out the degree to which my acceptance of this formalist position is really at odds with Meyer Schapiro's counter-argument against the unity of form and content. In "On Perfection, Coherence, and Unity of Form and Content," Schapiro wrote: "In practice, form and content are separable for the artist who, in advance of the work, possesses a form in the habit of his style that is available to many contents and a conception of a subject or theme rich in meaning and open to varied treatment. In the process of realization these separable components of his project are made to interact, and in the finished work there arise unique qualities, both of form and meaning, as the off-spring of this interaction, with many accords but also with qualities distinctive for each."

All architecture seems to be a conscious or unconscious commentary on this larger problem of art. So, though it is a popular idea that formalism is to poetics as syntax is to meaning (see Mario Gandelsonas in *ANY*), I am persuaded by the Russians that not only is syntax simply one of the devices of art, but that formalism is not situated on one side of the virgule in the form/content, move/ meaning dialectic. Rather, the dialectic is at the very center of formalism's philosophical construct.

I have begun to sort out formalism's identity and relevance in the following way: As it has descended from the post-cubist contemplations of the Russian literary avant-garde, formalism is not a sterile aesthetic purism, a narrowly focused, perhaps even formulaic, obsession with syntax or composition. Nor is it a simplistic "art for art's sake" doctrine that promotes form over content, or even simply form as content. Instead, it is a far more serious, multivalent, and equivocal proposition. If it centers on three major ideas – devices, conventions, and density (opacity) – and if its goal is toward art as strange-making, which involves a formal procedure whereby the object is transferred to a sphere of new perception, then it asks us to consider the possibility of an architecture whose aim, like poetry, is "to make perceptible the texture of the world in all its aspects," as Boris Mikhailovich Eikhenbaum asserted. And if poetry is "a complex transaction involving the semantic and morphological, as well as the phonetic, levels of language," as mature Russian formalism ultimately concluded, if the aesthetic dimension of art lies not in the absence of meaning but in a multiplicity/density of meanings, then this recognition is still important for the contemplation of an advanced, poetic architecture today.

Moreover, the degree to which an architecture of such multivalent density is realized raises the critical distinction between the visible and the visual. I would argue that the interrelation of the visible (the aesthetic) and the invisible (the poetic) constitutes the visual, and that formalism, therefore, ultimately addresses the problem of vision. As such, it questions what the critical intelligent eye sees. Mondrian and other De Stijl artists understood vision to be first, both optical and plastic (the latter refers to seeing underlying relations or abstraction), and second, the intellectual "seeing" of nonaesthetic ideas. This complex network of visible/invisible interrelationship calls to mind Rosalind Krauss's image of "the infrastructure of vision."

Thus I would hold that an architecture may be said to be part of a 20th-century formalist enterprise to the degree that (1) the techniques and devices of the visible, as applied to materials (both two-dimensional graphic notations and three-dimensional constructions) comprise a rigorous suprapersonal system; (2) the result is an architectural object that is strange with respect to everyday building (if not also with respect to the current advanced style); (3) this strange-making comprises a dense "infrastructure of vision." In other words, modern formalism, dialectical in nature because it includes the problem of form/content, move/meaning, is an unfamiliar nexus of the aesthetic/poetic (morphologic/semantic) that operates at a heightened order of difficulty and multivalence and is ruled by the adopted conventions (i.e., the suprapersonal system) of aesthetic structure.

Perhaps 20th-century formalism is found somewhere in the visual infrastructure established by four familiar architectural paradigms: Le Corbusier's Villa de Monzie at Garches, Giuseppe Terragni's Danteum, Eisenman's House I, and Michael Graves's Snyderman House. And though we will soon move into the 21st century, we are far from exhausting the lessons of these and similar formalist/modernist models.

Jeffrey Hildner, *New York City*

Move + Meaning

My first published foray into the intellectual arena of Formalism was an essay-length letter to the editor of the architectural journal *ANY*.

MOVE + MEANING

ANY had a short run. But fortunately, the journal ran long enough to include in Issue No. 11, July/August 1995, my essay, "Move + Meaning." I wasn't sure if Editor Cynthia Davidson, partner of renowned architect Peter Eisenman, would appreciate that I dared to challenge the points of view about Formalism that high-profile architectural theorists spelled out in a previous issue of *ANY*. So I was very pleased when Cynthia Davidson welcomed my pushback.

This essay served as a springboard for my second crack at the topic of Formalism the following year at the annual conference of ACSA: Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture. These twin essays about Formalism, the second essay extending the scope, laid a strong foundation for my research and creative projects during the past 25 years. Case in point: this book.

No Formalism? No book. Without Formalism—a special member of my mental tribe of mentors and allies—there would be no *VISUAL EF9ECTS*: no February 19, 2016, 40-minute talk in Florence at the Syracuse University symposium on Formalism that inspired this book. And when it comes to future creative work, it will all unfold shaped by multiple forces but not least by the complex, misinterpreted, ever-relevant, and intellectually riveting concept of Formalism—a word that I didn't capitalize in *ANY*. Technically correct, says *The Chicago Manual of Style*. But it also allows an author to take liberties in this area. And post-*ANY*, I do. Because I want to signal clearly that Formalism refers to the ideas of the early 20th-century literary movement called Russian Formalism. In other words, the capitalized word *Formalism* helps to distinguish the Russian school of thought from the generic word *formalism* used in everyday speech. Not a minor distinction, as it turns out.

Note the plus sign ("+") that connects Move and Meaning in this essay's title. As you'll see in the 1996 follow-up essay, "Formalism: Move I Meaning," which kicks off here on page 717, I changed the connecting typographic mark to a vertical line ("I")—reflecting my search for the typographic symbol that best reflects the concept of Move & Meaning itself. Which is to say, a punctuation mark that fits the bill aesthetically and symbolically. I landed on the ampersand. In the world of screenwriting, if more than one writer crafted a screenplay, an ampersand tells us that the writers worked as a team. Bingo.

I wrote the following two essays during the construction of DanteITelescope House. DanteITelescope House is a Formalist project. So I was ready to write when opportunity knocked. *ANY* knocked.

Save for minor refinements and a rewrite of the last paragraph, mainly to include two additional examples of 20th-century formalism (and work in a second use of the word *chess*), the essay appears here the way it ran in *ANY*.

MOVE + MEANING

What is formalism?

I have been thinking about this question since reading the special issue of *ANY* (7/8) on Colin Rowe, especially because I think of myself, at least on one level, as a formalist. But clearly there is disagreement and uncertainty today as to what formalism is, and the opinion of its relevance to an advanced architecture tends to be alternately noncommittal or pejorative. Moreover, there is obviously no consensus as to whether Rowe himself is a formalist. Peggy Deamer, who alone mentions the Russian formalists, comes closest to defining formalism in suprapersonal terms. These terms are relevant, though I would argue with some of the finer points of her explanation that seem to imply that strange-making, or defamiliarization, is more a psychological phenomenon than a formal one. As Victor Erlich points out in his classic study *Russian Formalism: Theory and Doctrine*, the Russian formalists believed that "before trying to explain anything, one should find out what it is." And if this has a tautological ring to it, it is also rather nicely consistent with Rowe's dedication to the idea of the scholar-as-detective, which Paulette Singley recalls in her fascinating article in the same issue. Anyway (as I believe Colin Rowe would say), I appreciate being provoked into (re)investigating this question.

An important source for the definition of formalism is Rosalind Krauss's brilliant essay in *Houses of Cards*, "Death of a Hermeneutic Phantom: Materialization of the Sign in the Work of Peter Eisenman." The essay firmly convinces the reader of five things: (1) 20th-century formalism had its origin in literary theory, specifically Russian formalism; (2) 20th-century formalism was therefore inextricably linked at its point of origin to the avant-garde, namely modernism; (3) 20th-century formalism was the "strategic conversion of transparency into opacity" (the former related to everything that was not art and the latter to everything that was) and relied on a taxonomy of devices for defamiliarizing the artistic object; (4) Rowe, who stressed that architecture is a form of text and concerned himself (with Robert Slutzky) with the issue of false versus a true transparency, is a formalist/modernist; (5) given this and given the fact that Eisenman's House I and House II are paradigmatic examples of 20th-century formalism in architecture, formalism can't be all bad.

Moreover, Krauss's identification of the transition from formalism to structuralism in Eisenman's work—"the dispersal of unities into a field of differences"—is significant, for it introduces the question: Irrespective of what formalism may actually turn out to be, once we do find out what it is, is it still relevant? That is, if "post-formalism" is now in, isn't formalism out? Can formalism really function today as an operative intellectual construct for an advanced architecture? I think yes.

If, as Alan Colquhoun writes, "the problem of architecture is part of a larger problem involving the whole notion of art," then the potential for meaningful formalist research in architecture is inexhaustible. It addresses the timeless problem of form and content—or, as is suggested by the chess analogy that fascinated both Victor Shklovsky and Ferdinand de Saussure, the problem of what I refer to as Move & Meaning. Here, it is clear that the Russians working during the cultural upheaval of 1910s, whose principal organization was OPOJAZ (The Society for the Investigation of Literature), reinvented the nature of this relationship. Shklovsky's attempt to define a non-objective literature in terms of devices and techniques applied to materials (which he initiated the same year, 1915, as Russian painter Kazimir Malevich mounted his revolutionary exhibition of non-objective paintings) has come down to us as a dilemma of the unity versus the separability of form and content. Is form content? Do the elements of content have an independent existence, exempt from the adopted laws of aesthetic structure? Is there not content beyond *visible "form as content"* even in an abstract painting by Piet Mondrian: *invisible content* that authenticates what might be called the "truth" of the aesthetic object so as to differentiate Mondrian's original painting from a forgery?

Though Shklovsky tried to expose the fallacy of the notion of separable content, he was tripped up by the double problem of philosophical and semantic complexities and ultimately failed in his attempt to articulate a cogent, mature position on the issue. He thus made it possible to consider the problem of the unity of form and content under the rubric of formalism in two very different ways. As Erlich wrote: "Was he implying that all that matters in art is form, or was he simply saying that everything in the work of art is necessarily formed, i.e., organized for an esthetic purpose?" I am currently more interested in the latter proposition—but, to the degree that the architectural equivalent of forgery is avoided, I do not reject the validity of the former. I am also trying to sort out the degree to which my acceptance of this formalist position is really at odds with Meyer Schapiro's counter-argument against the unity of form and content. In "On Perfection, Coherence, and Unity of Form and Content," Schapiro wrote: "In practice, form and content are separable for the artist who, in advance of the work, possesses a form in the habit

of his style that is available to many contents and a conception of a subject or theme rich in meaning and open to varied treatment. In the process of realization these separable components of his project are made to interact, and in the finished work there arise unique qualities, both of form and meaning, as the offspring of this interaction, with many accords but also with qualities distinctive for each."

All architecture seems to be a conscious or unconscious commentary on this larger problem of art. So though it is a popular idea that formalism is to poetics as syntax is to meaning (see Mario Gandelsonas in *ANY*), I am persuaded by the Russians that not only is syntax simply one of the devices of art, but that formalism is not situated on one side of the virgule in the Form/Content, Move/Meaning dialect. Rather, this dialect is at the very center of formalism's philosophical construct.

I have begun to sort out formalism's identity and relevance in the following way: as it has descended from the post-cubist contemplations of the Russian literary avant-garde, formalism is not a sterile aesthetic purism, a narrowly focused, perhaps even formulaic, obsession with syntax or composition. Nor is it a simplistic "art for art's sake" doctrine that promotes form over content, or even simply form as content. Instead, it is a far more serious, multivalent, and equivocal proposition. If it centers on three major ideas—devices, conventions, and density (opacity)—and if its goal is toward art as strange-making, which involves a formal procedure whereby the object is transferred to a sphere of new perception, then formalism asks us to consider the possibility of an architecture whose aim, like poetry, is "to make perceptible the texture of the world in all aspects," as Boris Mikhailovich Eikhenbaum asserted. And if poetry is "a complex transaction involving the semantic and morphological, as well as the phonetic, levels of language," as mature Russian formalism ultimately concluded, if the aesthetic dimension of art lies not in the absence of meaning but in multiplicity/density of meanings, then this recognition is still important for the contemplation of an advanced, poetic architecture today.

Moreover, the degree to which architecture of such multivalent density is realized raises the critical distinction between the visible and the visual. I would argue that the interrelation of the visible (the aesthetic) and the invisible (the poetic) constitutes the visual, and that formalism, therefore, ultimately addresses the problem of vision. As such, it questions what the critical intelligent eye sees. Mondrian and other De Stijl artists understood vision to

be first, both optical and plastic (the latter refers to seeing underlying relations or abstraction), and second, the intellectual "seeing" of non-aesthetic ideas. This complex network of visible /invisible interrelationship calls to mind Rosalind Krauss's image of "the infrastructure of vision."

Thus I would hold that an architecture may be said to be part of a 20th-century formalist enterprise to the degree that (1) the techniques and devices of the visible, as applied to materials (both two-dimensional graphic notations and three-dimensional constructions) comprise a rigorous suprapersonal system; (2) the result is an architectural object that is strange with respect to everyday building (if not also with respect to the current advanced style); (3) this strange-making comprises a dense "infrastructure of vision." In other words, modern formalism, dialectical in nature because it includes the problem of Form/Content, Move/Meaning, is an unfamiliar nexus of the aesthetic/poetic (morphologic/semantic) that operates at a heightened order of difficulty and multivalence and is ruled by the adopted conventions (i.e. the suprapersonal system) of aesthetic structure.

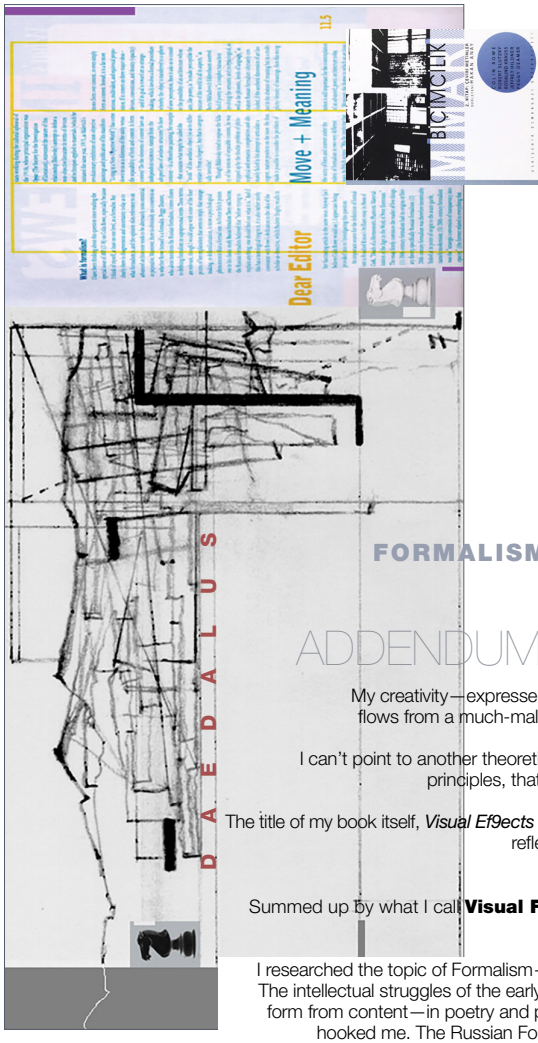
Perhaps 20th-century formalism is found somewhere in the visual infrastructure of four familiar architectural paradigms: Le Corbusier's Villa de Monzie/Stein at Garches (1927), Eisenman's House I (1967–1968)—and/or House II (1970)—Michael Graves's Snyderman House (1972), and Le Corbusier's Palace of Assembly at Chandigarh (1953). All four paradigms fall somewhere along a formalism spectrum that runs from one extreme to another, from Eisenman's House II to Le Corbusier's Palace of Assembly—from a fifth paradigm, Farkas Molnár's unbuilt Red Cube (1923), a formalist project that evokes associations with chess but foregrounds moves and backgrounds meanings, to a 6th paradigm, Giuseppe Terragni's unbuilt Danteum (1938), which foregrounds, in a work of surpassing quality and narrative precision, both moves *and* meanings, an intention signaled by the project's title. And though we will soon move into the 21st century, we are far from exhausting the lessons of these and similar formalist/modernist models.

The Internet Archive Wayback Machine preserves—with a revised, clarified ending posted under my pen name Madison Gray—the illustrated version of this essay.
https://web.archive.org/web/20210126081614/http://www.thearchitectpainter.com/MadisonGray/deep_SIGHT/reviews/MoveMeaning1.htm

See also my follow-up notes on "Formalism: Move | Meaning"
https://web.archive.org/web/20210126081618/http://www.thearchitectpainter.com/surface_7ARCHITECT/articles/formalism.htm

See a complete bibliography that accompanies my online essay "**Visual Formalism**"
https://archive.org/details/MoveMeaning

THE ARMIES OF FORM & STORY FIGHT THE WAR OF ART. THEY FIGHT FOR OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART.



ADDENDUM | MOVE & MEANING

My creativity—expressed primarily through buildings, paintings, and books—flows from a much-maligned and misunderstood concept called Formalism.

What is Formalism?

I can't point to another theoretical framework, an alternative matrix of concepts and principles, that more nearly serves as the fountainhead of my work.

The title of my book itself, *Visual Ef9ects | Architecture and the Chess Game of Form & Story,* reflects my embrace of the true essence of Formalism—and my signature expression of its principles.

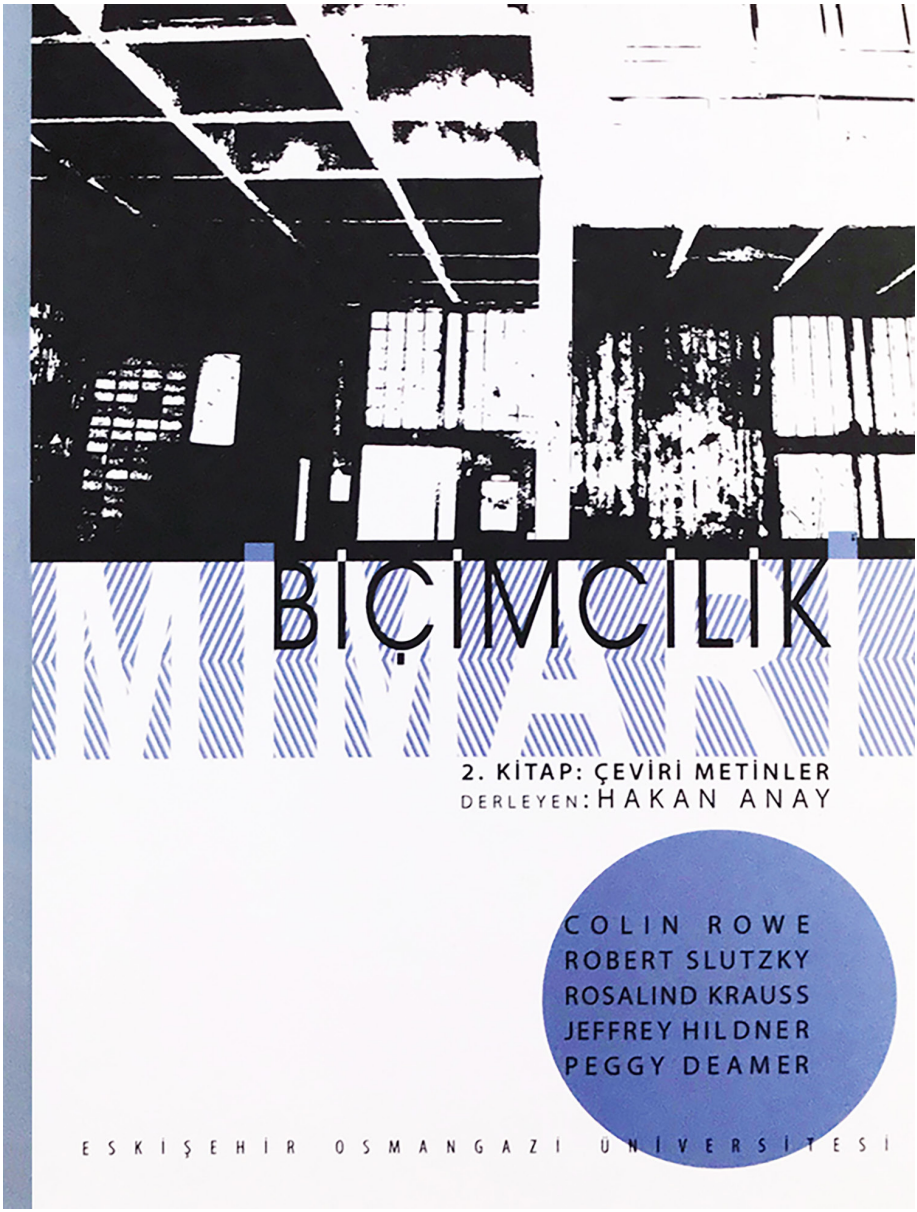
Summed up by what I call **Visual Formalism**—a term that crystallizes the theoretical foundation of Visual Ef9ects.

I researched the topic of Formalism—specifically **Russian Formalism**—for over 10 years. The intellectual struggles of the early 20th-century Russian literary theorists to distinguish form from content—in poetry and prose (for example, *What makes a poem a poem?*)—hooked me. The Russian Formalist insights that I gleaned from Victor Shklovsky's foundational essay "**Art as Technique**" (1917) and book ***Knight's Move*** (1923)—to which I refer in the Acknowledgments (pp. 14–15)—as well as from a wide spectrum of commentaries, including ***Russian Formalist Criticism: Four Essays*** (1965), translated and introduced by Lee T. Lemon and Marion J. Reis, and Victor Erlich's ***Russian Formalism: History and Doctrine***—and concepts like ***defamiliarization*** and ***strange-making***—indelibly shaped my outlook and my output.

I had found a way of viewing art in sync with the resonances of ancient architecture: an architecture that reflects, to use my terms, the **Unity of Abstract Form & Symbolic Story**.

In 1987, a few years before my encounter with Russian Formalism, I built a project later published in *Architectural Record* ("Sources of Inspiration," February 1991, pp. 72–77) with Russian Formalist echoes: my Princeton Studio's wall-as-canvas—(VE9: pp. 708–709 and 642–643)—"**Gray Square, Brook, and Smoke.**" But at that point, I could only dare to foresee the realization of a major expression of Russian Formalism, channeled and transposed through my metaphysical lens—and specifically focused on an architecture that evokes its origins in literature and astronomy toward a quest to unriddle the **Meta-Architecture of the Form & Story of Reality**.

But then, thanks to fellow Princetonian David Zlowe, opportunity knocked:
DANTE | TELESCOPE HOUSE



5 × 8.5 in. book cover of ***Architectural Formalism*** (*Mimari Biçimcilik*), compiled by Dr. Hakan Anay (2012), featuring a Turkish translation of "Formalism: Move | Meaning," the refereed paper I presented in 1996 at the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture 84th Annual Meeting and Technology Conference when I was teaching at the University of Virginia.

Contemporary 2012 publication announcement: https://www.arkitera.com/haber/mimari-bicimcilik
ESOGÜ official publication record—Mimari Biçimcilik: https://avesis.ogu.edu.tr/yayin/48f64453-344e-44aa-855f-de34066a6831/mimari-bicimcilik

After my 1995 letter to the editor was published in *ANY*, I crafted a follow-up essay, "Formalism: Move I Meaning," which I presented at the 1996 annual conference of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA). The essay was subsequently published in the conference proceedings.

I presented the paper with many slides, both black-and-white and color. For publication in ACSA's black-and-white *Proceedings*, I submitted four illustrations. And the primary one, Fig. 1: the DantelTelescope House North Star Monolith? Illegible.

Visual Ef9ects finally reveals the truth.

Note that in this essay's title, I replaced the plus sign ("+") that I used in the essay for *ANY* with a vertical line ("I"), seeking to more nearly convey through punctuation the relationship between Move and Meaning. Not so much additive as dialectical: two opposing yet interacting forces.

I went with a vertical line instead of a slash ("/"), also called a virgule, because I like the look and connotation of the vertical more. I find it more aesthetically and symbolically iconic, architectonic. Both punctuation marks ("I" and "/") signal that the relationship between Move and Meaning involves a complex interplay of affinities and oppositions, cooperations and conflicts. But I prefer "I" over "/" in both the Move department and the Meaning department. By the way, in case you're wondering, this kind of intensive attention to aesthetic and symbolic properties of punctuation? To visual and intellectual precision? That makes me a formalist/Formalist.

As I said earlier, I eventually landed on the ampersand (&): Move & Meaning. Bottom line, I chose to keep it simple. The dialectical tension between Move and Meaning—opposing yet interacting forces, two armies locked in a chess game—accompanies the creation, presentation, and perception of every work of art, whether the artist or spectator knows it or not. But the ampersand speaks to a public audience. It does a fancy-free reader-friendly job of conveying the simple truth about Move and Meaning's coexistence. The ampersand says, "Move and Meaning are two sides of the same coin, like heads and tails—simultaneously autonomous but inseparable, independent but interdependent." As with cowriters of a screenplay, the ampersand says, "Partners."

A Turkish translation of "Formalism: Move I Meaning" was subsequently published as "Biçimcilik: Hamle I Anlam," translated by Ezgi İşbilen, in *Mimari Biçimcilik: İkinci Kitap: Çeviri Metinler* (*Architectural Formalism: Book Two: Translated Texts*), compiled by Dr. Hakan Anay (Eskişehir: Eskişehir Osmangazi University, 2012), pp. 51–56. ISBN 978-975-7936-89-3. Published as part of the Eskişehir Osmangazi University Department of Architecture Theory Library project, the unusual publication comprises two books bound back-to-back in a single volume: Anay's authored *Mimari Biçimcilik: Birinci Kitap* (*Architectural Formalism: Book One*) and *İkinci Kitap: Çeviri Metinler* (*Book Two*), the companion collection of translated essays. As conveyed by the cover of Book Two, my essay appears alongside essays by Peggy Deamer, Rosalind Krauss, Robert Slutzky, and Colin Rowe.

My pairing of the words *Move* and *Meaning* stems from the Russian Formalism analogy of chess. But in *ANY* and my ACSA essay, I only used the word *chess* three times. I could not foresee that the Russian Formalism analogy of chess would evolve to become the nucleus of my cinematic theory of architecture—or that Move & Meaning's kindred spirit, Form & Story, would emerge as the dialectical star on the chessboard of my artwork and the pages of this book.

I made minor refinements, corrected typos, added a fifth illustration, and, going down the stretch, connected the dots between Move | Meaning and chess. When I refer to Dante | Telescope House, I include a superscript: ^{Zlowe} —to honor my brave patron, David Zlowe. Something I stopped doing somewhere along the way to simplify the name of the building.

FORMALISM: MOVE | MEANING

We do not experience the commonplace,
we do not see it; rather, we recognize it.
We do not see the walls of our room;
and it is very difficult for us to see errors
in proofreading, especially if the material
is written in a language we know well,
because we cannot force ourselves to see,
to read, and not to "recognize" the familiar
word. If we have to define specifically
"poetic" perception and artistic perception
in general, then we suggest this definition:
"Artistic perception is that perception
in which we experience form—
perhaps not form alone, but certainly form."

—Victor Shklovsky,
"The Resurrection of the Word" (1914)[1]

What is formalism? I have been thinking about this question since reading the special issue of *ANY* 7/8 on Colin Rowe (and since contributing to *ANY* 11 by way of response). *ANY* 7/8 makes clear that there is disagreement and uncertainty today as to what formalism is, and the opinion of its relevance to an advanced architecture tends to be alternately noncommittal or pejorative. I share the desire of Yve-Alain Bois, who writes in *Painting as Model* (xv): "I would like to rescue what is called formalism from the bad press it has received in much art historical writing during the past twenty years."

The issue is especially meaningful to me because I think of myself, at least on one level, as a formalist. That is to say, I am "concerned chiefly," as Lee T. Lemon and Marion J. Reis put it in *Russian Formalist Criticism* (6l), "with the internal relationships that prevail within the work" of art, and I adhere to the "necessity of starting with the specificity of the object" (Bois xv). The object may be a chair, a painting, or a building—a drawing, a wall, or a room. I think, not unlike Le Corbusier and Julien Gaudet before him, that architecture is, again at least on one level, a formal language, whose mastery requires visual literacy.

Fig. 1. Dante|Telescope House [Zlowe] | 1991–1996
North Star Monolith I: The steel beam telescope—a shard of ancient suns—sights the North Star . . .

Project Photographed by Yukio Futagawa
for Issue 51, Spring 1997 (pp. 96–105)—
Global Architecture Houses

Visual literacy involves an advanced apprehension of abstract and optical properties of line and plane. In his 1435 treatise *On Painting* (59), Leon Battista Alberti writes that "the best artist can only be one who has learned to understand the outline of the plane and all its qualities." Le Corbusier writes in *Towards a New Architecture* (201), "Profile and contour are the touchstone of the Architect . . . a pure creation of the mind; they call for the plastic artist." Just as a musician requires ear training, the plastic artist requires eye training. Eye training seeks fluency in what Gyorgy Kepes titled one of his books: the *Language of Vision*. This requires knowledge of the interrelated conceptual/perceptual phenomena of such things as "mass, surface, and plan"—Le Corbusier's "three reminders to architects" (LC 2)—figure and field, architectonic structure, and composition.[2] As Bois suggests (xvii), it is impossible for the plastic artist to "avoid taking the issue of form extremely seriously."

Does an acceptance of these ideas make one a formalist? If so, does it make formalism primarily aesthetic-centered? Moreover, does a definition of formalism that proceeds along these lines require another classification for the architect who, on another level, is also interested in content, or meaning?

If, as Alan Colquhoun writes in *Modernity and the Classical Tradition* (115), "the problem of architecture is part of a larger problem involving the whole notion of art" then the question of formalism is important because its origins and boundaries extend beyond architecture. Furthermore, if we hope to understand the contemporary condition of so-called post-formalism, then it would seem that we ought to first have an understanding of formalism. In this paper, I attempt to recall an intellectual, historical datum for the debate about formalism, one that centers specifically on the researches of the Russian Formalists. Though it is an intricate topic, I attempt to identify a number of main issues and then suggest an initial position for the making of an advanced architecture that extends the Russians' open-ended investigations.

STRANGE-MAKING AND PERCEPTION: ART AS DEVICE

The early modernist idea of perceptible, "Significant form" as the *sine qua non* of art (and as the principal concern of criticism) was articulated not only in Victor Shklovsky's writings (Shklovsky was the leader of the Petersburg formalists; Roman Jakobson, the principal link between formalism and structuralism, was the leader of the allied Moscow Linguistic Circle). English critical theoreticians of art, notably Clive Bell in his book *Art*, 1913, articulated similar ideas (33). Bell's subject was principally modern French/Spanish painting (Postimpressionism and Cubism), for which the late 19th-century formal deformations and researches of Seurat and Cézanne (and perhaps Piero della Francesca before them) served as principal starting points. It is to the work of the Russian literary theorists and critics that we must turn, however, in order to find a deep inward look to the problem of structure and meaning in art on a serious intellectual level that underlies and extends the simple idea of perceptible, Significant Form.

As Victor Erlich points out in his classic study *Russian Formalism: Theory and Doctrine* (251), the Russian Formalists believed that "before trying to explain anything, one should find out what it is." Fortunately, Erlich's classic study is indispensable in this regard. It is the scholarly foundation on which other essential scholarship on the subject rests, notably that by Fredric Jameson and Lemon and Reis.

Another important source for a definition of formalism, one from within the literature of architecture, is Rosalind Krauss's brilliant essay in *Houses of Cards*, "Death of a Hermeneutic Phantom: Materialization of the Sign in the Work of Peter Eisenman." Central to the essay are the following propositions: (1) 20th-century formalism had its origins in literary theory, specifically Russian Formalism; (2) 20th-century formalism was therefore linked inextricably at its point of origin to the avant-garde, namely modernism; (3) 20th-century formalism was the "strategic conversion

of transparency into opacity" (the former related to everything that was not art and the latter to everything that was) and relied on a taxonomy of devices for *defamiliarizing* (making strange) the artistic object—this idea is central to the critical posture adopted by Rowe and Slutzky in architecture; (4) given this and given the fact that Eisenman's House I and House II are paradigmatic examples of 20th-century formalism in architecture, formalism cannot be all bad.

Krauss does not mean to suggest that we should overlook Cubism as central to the emergence of the Russians' reexamination of the problem of form and perception in literature. Avant-garde experiments in literature predate Cubism, but the radical assertion of the autonomy of form that erupted in painting in the first decade of the 1900s did more than a little to inspire the Russian literary theorists and critics of the next decade to search out and promulgate an equivalent artistic differentia within literature.[3] It is said that the Italian Futurist painter Umberto Boccioni, when he first encountered Filippo Tommaso Marinetti's Futurist free-verse poetry in 1910 (a year before seeing Picasso's and Braque's paintings), exclaimed: "We need something like that in painting" (Lista 15). No doubt, the attempt on the part of the Russian literary avant-garde to sort out the difference between poetic/imaginative language versus practical language—to sort out a theory of heightened awareness, of perceptible form, as the basis of art—derived, at least in part, from a similar sentiment in reverse.

For example, picture Picasso's portrait *Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler* (fig. 2) while reading the following excerpt from Shklovsky's famous assertion of early formalist theory, "Art as Technique"—alternatively translated, "Art as Device"—in which Shklovsky quotes Tolstoy's *Diary* (Lemon and Reis 12):

> Habitualization devours works, clothes, furniture,
> one's wife, and the fear of war. "If the whole complex lives
> of many people go on unconsciously,
> then such lives are as if they had never been."
> And art exists that one may recover the sensation of life. . . .

© 2018 Estate of Pablo Picasso / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Fig. 2. Pablo Picasso, *Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler*, 1910
Oil on canvas, 39 9/16 × 28 9/16 in.

The purpose of art is to impart the sensation of things as they are perceived and not as they are known. The technique of art is to make objects "unfamiliar," to make forms difficult, to increase the difficulty and length of perception because the process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged. *Art is a way of experiencing the artfulness of an object; the object is not important.*

Theo van Doesburg's pictorial transformation of the cow fig. 3), which he produced the same year as Shklovsky's essay, 1917, is an example of Shklovsky's definitions of the purpose and technique of art. Van Doesburg's primary objective was to decode the underlying plastic structure of the cow. It was an exercise in abstraction, whereby the forms that underlie the representational facticity of the cow might not only be revealed but brought to the foreground of perception. Van Doesburg thereby makes a familiar object unfamiliar. He increases the difficulty and length of perception. The subject of the painting is not immediately recognizable as a cow. In fact, is it not the title of the painting, *Study for Composition* (*The Cow*), that gives it away? As Shklovsky writes (Lemon and Reis 13), "Tolstoy makes the familiar seem strange by not naming the familiar object." Van Doesburg's act of aesthetic, formal "defamiliarization" brings the object of cow into a sphere of new perception. He makes it strange. Shklovsky writes (Lemon and Reis 13): "After we see an object several times, we begin to recognize it. The object is in front of us and we know about it, but we do not see it. . . . Art removes objects from the automatism of perception."

In "Art as Technique," Shklovsky's main concern is identifying the difference between practical language and poetic language. One of the main ideas under attack is what he calls "the law of the economy of creative effort" (Lemon and Reis 9). This law suggests that, in the words of Spencer, "a satisfactory style is precisely that style which delivers the greatest amount of thought in the fewest words" (Lemon and Reis 10). Shklovsky argues that this is a virtue for "practical" language, whose chief purpose is to convey meaning. Poetic language, however, requires "roughening" and "difficulty." As Boris Eichenbaum summarizes in his essay, "The Theory of the 'Formal Method'," 1926 (Lemon and Reis 114):

> Shklovsky likewise repudiated the principle of artistic economy, a principle which had been strongly asserted in aesthetic theory, and opposed it with the device of

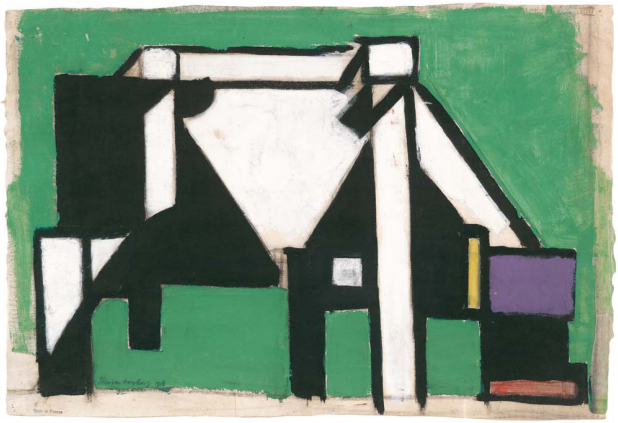


Fig. 3. Theo van Doesburg, *Study for Composition* (*The Cow*), c.1917
Gouache, oil, and charcoal on paper, 15 5/8 × 22 3/4 in.

> "defamiliarization" and the notion of "roughened form." That is, he saw art as increasing the difficulty and span of perception "because the process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged"; he saw art as a means of destroying the automatism of perception.

Shklovsky focused on the problem of metaphor. He attacked the deep-seated idea that the purpose of metaphor in poetic, imaginative literature is to make the unfamiliar familiar. He proposed that, in fact, the opposite is true. Metaphor, in the service of poetic form/language, causes our perceptions to be prolonged, causes us to stop and think, and in fact distances the familiar from us. The devices of euphemism and riddles (such as crossword puzzles) are prime examples of this. For example, when I say "I need a cuppa joe," I am defamiliarizing the familiar. I am making the familiar strange. I am transforming, through the roughening device of slang, the practical, non-poetic phrase, "I need a cup of coffee." The visual slang of Frank Gehry's house in Santa Monica functions as strange-making in a similar way in architecture. Gehry's strange-

making is also dependent on another of Shklovsky's devices of defamiliarization: "seeing things out of their normal context" (Lemon and Reis 17). The juxtaposition of Gehry's formal slang (or visual cubism, depending on how we look at it) to the existing context heightens our awareness of the presence of artistry all the more. The chain-link fence, in particular, is an obvious example of this device of defamiliarization, of seeing the familiar out of context.

FORM AND CONTENT: THE ULTIMATE RIDDLE

It is important to distinguish between early formalist statements and mature formalist statements (Erlich 171–191). They differ chiefly with respect to the not insignificant and thorny problem of the semantic issue in art. One of the fascinating aspects of the evolution of formalism is that Shklovsky and others were ultimately forced to grapple very directly with the conundrum of form and content—or, as implied by the chess analogy that fascinated both Shklovsky and Saussure, the problem that I call "move and meaning."

Here it is clear that the Russians, working during the cultural upheaval of the 1910s, whose Petersburg organization was called OPOJAZ (The Society for the Investigation of Literature), reinvented, or rediscovered, the nature of the relationship between move and meaning. Lemon and Reis (4–5) comment on the implications of Shklovsky's theory:

> The purpose of art, according to Shklovsky, is to force us to notice. . . . To the extent that a work of art can be experienced, to the extent that it is, it is like any other object. It may "mean" in the same way that any object means; it has, however, one advantage—it is designed especially for perception, for attracting and holding attention. Thus it not only bears meaning, it forces an awareness of its meaning upon the reader.

Shklovsky first attempted to define poetic form (artistry) by replacing the traditional dichotomy, form and content, with devices/techniques and materials.[4] He may well have been trying to define a non-objective poetry, such that literature could have something that painting had already achieved. For we must remember that Shklovsky initiated his formalist theory at the same time as Russian painter Kazimir Malevich mounted his revolutionary exhibition of non-objective paintings and publication of his Suprematist manifesto. (In 1926, Malevich published a follow-up titled *The Non-Objective World: The Manifesto of Suprematism*). Later, Shklovsky attempted to sort out more directly the issue of content/meaning. What has come down to us from the mature statements of Russian Formalism is a dilemma of the unity versus the separability of form and content.

Is form content? Early formalism allowed as much, perhaps. Mature formalism regarded the idea as too simplistic and problematic. Do the elements of content have an independent existence that is exempt from the adopted laws of aesthetic structure? According to early formalist theory (and radical formalists, or "aesthetic purists"), no. According to mature formalist theory (and moderate formalists), yes. Is there not content beyond *visible "form as content"* even in an abstract painting by Piet Mondrian: *invisible content* that authenticates what might be called the "truth" of the aesthetic object so as to differentiate Mondrian's original painting from a forgery? Does the matrix of Mondrian's canvas, a chess game of visible/optical moves, admit to underlying, invisible, poetic meaning? Surely *Broadway Boogie Woogie*, 1942–1943, for example, includes meaning as an inherent part of its artistic totality that transcends its optical facticity. Even his paintings that do not have representational titles, such as *Composition in White, Black and Red* (fig. 4), 1936, are arguably a manifestation of non-aesthetic meaning that underlies the visible phenomena. H.L.C. Jaffe's book on the origins of De Stijl, *De Stijl 1917–1931*, in which he discusses Mondrian's Calvinist and Theosophical epistemology, makes it difficult to conclude otherwise.

This raises the critical distinction between the visible and the visual. I would argue that the interrelation of the visible (the aesthetic) and the invisible (the poetic, the semantic, the philosophical) constitutes the visual, and that formalism, therefore, ultimately addresses the problem of vision. As such, it questions what the critical, educated eye sees. Van Doesburg, Mondrian, and other De Stijl artists understood vision to be first, both optical and plastic (the latter refers to seeing underlying relations, or abstraction), and second, the intellectual "seeing" of non-aesthetic ideas that establish the cognitive matrix of the work on other levels. This complex network of visible/invisible interrelationship calls to mind Krauss's image of "the infrastructure of vision" (Krauss, "Grids" 15).

In point of fact, though Shklovsky tried to expose the fallacy of the notion of separable content, he was tripped up by the double problem of philosophical and semantic complexities and ultimately failed in his attempt to articulate a cogent, mature position on the issue. He thus made it possible to consider the problem of the unity of form and content under the rubric of formalism in two very different ways. As Erlich writes (187): "Was he implying that all that matters in art is form, or was he simply saying that everything in the work of art is necessarily *formed*, i.e. organized for an esthetic purpose?" I am currently persuaded by the latter proposition, which represents more the viewpoint of advanced formalist theory at the point when it evolved into structuralism. I believe, however, that at the heart of this concept of formalism is the unmistakable conviction that, in fact, nothing matters in art more than or even as much as form. I suppose that it is a matter of wanting to have it both ways, and that, perhaps, formalism is defined precisely by this equivocal point. Moreover, I am trying to sort out the degree to which my acceptance of this formalist position is really at odds with Meyer Schapiro's counterargument against the unity of form and content. In "On Perfection, Coherence, and Unity of Form and Content" in *Theory and Philosophy of Art* (46–47), Schapiro wrote:

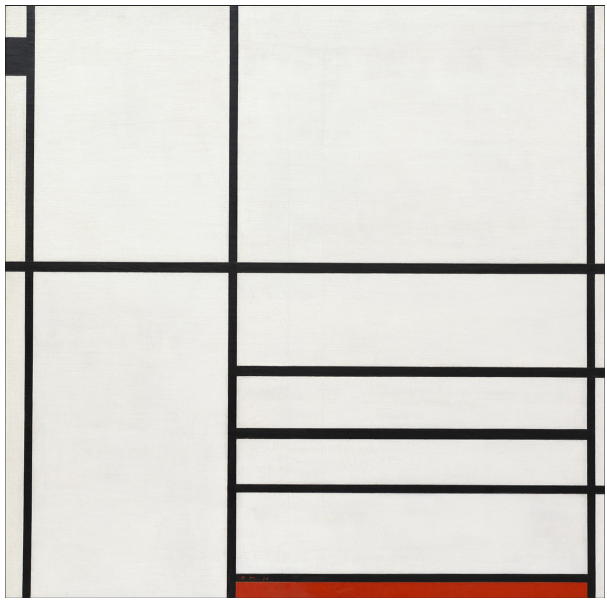


Fig. 4. Piet Mondrian, *Composition in White, Black, and Red*, 1936
Oil on canvas, 40 1/4 × 41 in.

In practice, form and content are separable for the artist who, in advance of the work, possesses a form in the habit of his style that is available to many contents, and a conception of a subject or theme rich in meaning and open to varied treatment.

In the process of realization these separable components of his project are made to interact and in the finished work there arise unique qualities, both of form and meaning, as the offspring of this interaction, with many accords but also with qualities distinctive for each.

Ultimately, the Russian Formalists were unable, if not unwilling, to avoid the semantic reality of poetry. Thus, they arrived at the surprising inclusivist conclusion that unless we see art seen in relation to the deeper (and surprising) semiotic realities that underlie it, we risk misperceiving art and accepting the popular misperception of formalism, which, as Bois contends, depends on a false opposition. According to Bois (xv), this false opposition is the basis for the "blackmail of antiformalism." Bois writes (xvii), "either one is a formalist, hence necessarily oblivious to "meaning," or one is an antiformalist, hence entirely uninterested in formal matters. The either/or structure . . . [is] the generic structure of blackmail."

Formalism, as it has descended from the Russians, springs from the simple, but polemical idea that the purpose of art is to rouse us to a new perception of the world. This heightening of awareness and consciousness results from the act of defamiliarization, or strange-making, which involves at least three major ideas: (1) that art involves applying devices (techniques), to materials, including conventional devices and invented ("free") devices; (2) that difficulty, density, or "roughened" form are the chief devices for achieving strange-making—they destroy the automatism of perception by prolonging the gaze, and thereby distinguish poetic form from practical, ease-of-perception form; as Shklovsky writes, "density (*faktura*) is the principal characteristic of this peculiar world of deliberately constructed objects, the totality of which we call art" (Erlich 177); and (3) that the various devices that constitute an artistic construction must be "'revealed," "displayed," or "laid bare" (Lemon and Reis 26). At the core of aesthetic perception are the concepts/devices of "deviation," "divergence," "creative deformation," "semantic shifts" (Erlich 176–180) and "metaphoric displacements" (Bois 83).[5] These and similar ideas are central to formalism's metaphysics, its starting point, which maintains an age-old view of "art as a rediscovery of the world" (Erlich 179) and involves the dialectical phenomenon of Move|Meaning.

DANTE | TELESCOPE HOUSE ZLOWE

It is said that the idea of art as research started with Cézanne. I regard my recent work, Dante|Telescope House Zlowe (fig.1) as the built expression of my research into Russian Formalism and Cubism. I am interested in heightening the perception of architecture as a dense, multivalent "infrastructure of vision," in making an architecture that is defamiliar with respect to everyday building, if not also with respect to prevailing advanced styles. I am wary of the "familiar way" because Victor Shklovsky has helped me to see that "precisely because it is the familiar way, it is not the artistic way" (Lemon and Reis 25). I am concerned both with architecture's identity as an abstract plastic art and also with its ancient, original iconographic and ontological function as text and observatory. My work centers on the interrelated connections of architecture to painting, literature, and astronomy. I attempt to bring architecture into a sphere of new perception through devices and techniques applied to materials and engage directly the problem of Move|Meaning.

The primary architectural events of the project are the outdoor room and the garden facade (the garden wall) that defines the room [see the drawing on p. 457 here in *Visual Ef9ects*]. The garden facade features the "Dante|Telescope Monolith"—aka "North Star Monolith I"—and the "Diptych Column." The Monolith is structural (in the engineering sense, that is). The free-standing Diptych Column is not. The primary function of both is to support an idea.

The steel beam "Telescope," jutting upward through the Monolith, points to the North Star—a device of orientation as well as a device of memory, evoking architecture's original connection to astronomy, calling to mind that the first architects were astronomer-priests.

The word “DANTE,” which is written across the Monolith, employs a principal device of Synthetic Cubism, thus signifying the connections between architecture and painting, and between Cubism and literary formalism. It also recalls architecture’s ancient, original connection to writing—*literature*—namely, the idea of a building as a book, and a book as a building. Moreover, “DANTE” is intended to recall Giuseppe Terragni’s Danteum (1938), which I believe is a paradigm of early twentieth-century formalism in architecture. Thus, the word “DANTE” functions ultimately as a device of self-reference: It refers to architecture’s own ancient and modern interdisciplinary history and signifies architecture’s unavoidable engagement of the problem of formalism.[6]

In the context of a typical suburban neighborhood, where walls are brick or horizontally sided and windows are double-hung, we see a defamiliar sight/site. To one side of a free-standing steel column is a stucco wall. It is opaque. To the other side is a glass wall. It is transparent. The opaque part (which we understand to be a “symbolic” window) reads as an enigmatic vertical monument. The transparent part (the “real” window) reads as a typical, horizontally delineated, modern window. We understand that the monument wall (the “memory” wall) is to be looked at primarily from the outside (the visual rays originate from the landscape) and that the glass wall is to be seen through primarily from the inside. The memory wall, or monument, presents a *defamiliar object of opacity*. The glass wall offers a counterpoint—it presents a *familiar lens of transparency*. The glass wall functions as an optical device for *earthly observation*. The Dante|Telescope Monolith functions as an instrument for *astronomical observation*—as well as a device for spiritual *orientation* and *contemplation*. The opposing sides of the diptych operate in dialectical tension like the left/right lenses of Osip Brik’s spectacles—Brik was a formalist theorist—in Aleksandr Rodchenko’s photograph, (fig. 5), 1924. The visual and conceptual differences between the two walls—which together form one wall—heighten our perception of each.

Fig. 5.
Aleksandr Rodchenko,
Osip Brik, 1924

The black Dante|Telescope Monolith—proportioned 1:4:9, the square of the first three integers—commands our attention on its own. It features paint and type. A steel beam passes through it and points to the sky. It is strange. We are caused to perceive the nature of *wall* in a new light. A wall is a canvas: a painting. A wall is a page: a book. A wall is a scientific instrument: a telescope and compass. A metaphor. Simultaneously aesthetical and symbolical. Poetic. Where before, due to routinization of our perception, our eyes might have merely *recognized* a wall, they now *see* a wall. Our perception heightens in regard to what the making of a wall in architecture is all about: art—"a rediscovery of the world." Not only form but meaning forces itself upon us. We are forced to see and read a familiar word, "DANTE," in a new context. We wonder what the word means.

Russian Formalists used the analogy of chess primarily to convey a central paradox of art: Art is a game played by a system of fixed rules—but these rules give the artist greater freedom of choice. I refocus the analogy to include meaning.

Move|Meaning is my chess-analogy term for the dialectical tension between form and content that shapes the contours and soul of art. The dialectical tension between the Moves of a chess game and the Meanings of the chess pieces—and between the looks and the names of chess pieces—signifies the reality of formalism from which art cannot escape.

Finally, like Yves-Alain Bois (xxiv), I will let Roland Barthes provide the last word on this elusive subject:

> The formalism I have in mind does not consist in "forgetting," "neglecting," "reducing," content ("man"), but only in not stopping at the threshold of content (let's keep the word, provisionally); content is *precisely* what interests formalism, because its endless task is each time to push content back (until the notion of origin ceases to be pertinent), to displace it according to a play of successive forms.

NOTES

1. [p. 720] Quoted by Boris Eichenbaum in "The Theory of the 'Formal Method'," 1926 (Lemon and Reis 112).

2. [p. 722] On the subject of composition, for example, which has always been celebrated in music as the supreme artistic act, Julien Gaudet writes in *Éléments et théorie de l'architecture*, 1902: "Nothing, to be sure, is more engaging than composition, nothing more seductive. It is the true realm of the artist with no limits or frontiers but the impossible" (Banham, 20).

3. [p. 724] Jakobson provides specific evidence of the impact of Cubism, as well as Saussure, on the Russian literary school: "Arriving in Prague in 1920, I procured myself the *Course in General Linguistics*, and it is precisely the insistence, in Saussure's *Course*, on the question of relations which especially impressed me. It corresponds in a striking manner with the particular accent given by cubist painters such as Braque and Picasso, not on the objects themselves, but on their relations" (Bois 86).

4. [p. 729] As Eichenbaum writes: "Concerning form, the Formalists thought it important to change the meaning of this muddled term. It was important to destroy these traditional correlatives and to enrich the idea of form with new significance. The notion of 'technique,' because it has to do directly with the distinguishing features of poetic and practical speech, is much more significant in the long-range evolution of formalism than is the notion of 'form"' (Lemon and Reis 115).

5. [p. 732] Bois notes that "plastic metaphorization [is] at the heart of cubism" (85).

6. [p. 734] The word "DANTE," in addition to the larger significations explained above, refers to a specific passage in the *Commedia* (*Inferno* 1, 10): "Io non so ben ridir com'i' v'entrai"—etched in the door-height glass sidelight at the entrance to the house. Translation: *I do not know well how to recount how I entered there*. (My interest in this quote was inspired by Schumacher [108], though his translation is slightly different.) I intend for Dante's uncertainty to signify the root ontological conundrum, which involves the problem of metaphysical "orientation." This stands in contradistinction to the greater certainty that the "Telescope," pointed at the North Star, signifies with respect to the comparatively elementary problem of physical orientation. I explain this and other aspects of the move/meaning structure of Dante|Telescope House [Zlowe] in my essay "Celestial Contemplation: Architecture and Astronomy," as yet unpublished.

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A SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT

D A N T E | T E L E S C O P E H O U S E

The first architects were astronomer-priests: observant and intuitive seers seeking the truth — people possessed of special powers of perception and insight on a vision quest to unriddle the architecture of the world: the architecture not only of the outer world of matter but also the inner world of spirit, not only of the world of the here and now but also the worlds of the after and before.

Looking out and looking in, these primordial architects conjured buildings from the substance of stories and stars.

At root, that sums up what I too have done via the symbols of Dante (stories) and the Telescope (stars) at Dante|Telescope House.

Through art, we remember and continue the quest . . .

"A STORY IS A CREATIVE DEMONSTRATION OF TRUTH." —ROBERT MCKEE

THE ARMIES OF FORM & STORY FIGHT THE WAR OF ART THEY FIGHT FOR OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART

SIGNIFICANT ARCHITECTURE — Transcendent Architecture, resonating with Impact & Meaning — requires more than the display of an architect's aesthetic mastery of Form: more than the display of a building's exquisite interplay of materials, space, and light.

Significant Architecture requires double-barreled VISUAL EF**9**ECTS
The silent "9" stands for Story.
Truth.

My book presents a manifesto: Build brave. Build beautiful. Build the truth.

IN VISUAL EF9ECTS, ARCHITECT JEF7REY HILDNER BUILDS ON SIGNATURE THEMES AND CONCEPTS THAT HE LAID OUT IN HIS BOOK *DAEDALUS 9* —TURNING AGAIN TO THE CINEMATIC METAPHOR OF CHESS TO BRING HIS THEORY OF ARCHITECTURE TO LIFE. AN AWARD-WINNING SCREENWRITER AS WELL AS AN AWARD-WINNING ARCHITECT, HILDNER TRANSPOSES INSIGHTS FROM THE ARENA OF STORY ARCHITECTURE TO HIS PARALLEL ARENA OF BUILDING ARCHITECTURE.

VISUAL EF9ECTS REFLECTS HIS QUEST TO DESIGN BUILDINGS THAT PRESENT A CREATIVE DEMONSTRATION OF THE CHESS GAME OF ART, WHERE THE WHITE ARMY OF FORM (AESTHETICS) AND THE BLACK ARMY OF STORY (SYMBOLICS) BATTLE FOR OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART— FORM & STORY FIGHT TO CREATE A HEART-POUNDING WORK OF ART.

SILVER KNIGHT ARCHITECTURE IS A MOVIE—ideally, an artistic act of surpassing quality that scores high on the White Knight Index of Aesthetics and on the Black Knight Index of Symbolics: Move & Meaning. Form & Story. A screenplay written in the physical materials of construction and light and space—a building that represents the same thing as Robert McKee's definition of Story: "**a creative demonstration of truth.**"

Icarus, 2009. Oil on canvas. 48 x 72 in.

THE WAR OF ART

Toward A Significant Architecture : A Silver Knight Architecture

THERE IS NO GOING BACK

ARCHITECTURE IS A CHESS GAME OF FORM & STORY WAGED ON THE BATTLEFIELD OF A BUILDING AND ITS SITE

LIFE-SIZE CHESS GAME ON PALACE SQUARE, ST. PETERSBURG, 1924

ARCHITECTURE IS A CHESS GAME OF FORM & STORY WAGED ON THE BATTLEFIELD OF OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART

VISION QUEST

B O O K S

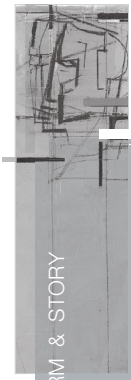
ARCHITECTURE IS A CHESS GAME OF FORM & STORY WAGED ON THE BATTLEFIELD OF A BUILDING AND ITS SITE

ARCHITECTURE IS A METAPHOR FOR THE FORM & STORY OF THE WORLD—

"GREAT ART IS THE OUTWARD EXPRESSION OF AN INNER LIFE OF THE ARTIST, AND THIS INNER LIFE WILL RESULT IN HIS PERSONAL VISION OF THE WORLD."
—EDWARD HOPPER

A METAPHOR FOR OUR LABYRINTH R.U.N.

archive.org/details/Jef7reyHildnerArchitect-Essays



JEF7REY HILDNER IS AN AWARD-WINNING ARCHITECT, PAINTER, AND WRITER.

Founder of The Architect Painter Press and author of nine books, including *Daedalus 9*, *Picasso Lessons*, and *Live Brave*, Hildner explores through his work the visible and invisible architecture of art and life. His individualist buildings, paintings, and essays appear in a wide range of publications—from *The Christian Science Journal* and *Christian Science Sentinel*, two magazines that he served for ten years as senior editor, senior writer, and creative director, to *Journal of Architectural Education*, *Architectural Record*, and *Global Architecture Houses*.

A *magna cum laude* graduate of Princeton University, where he also earned his master's degree in architecture, Hildner lives in Sacramento, California—where, like Daedalus, he dares not fly too close to the sun . . . but still throughout his Labyrinth Run . . . hopes to always . . .

Write Brave.
Paint Brave.
Architect Brave.

THE SILVER KNIGHT OF FORM & STORY

MY AVATAR

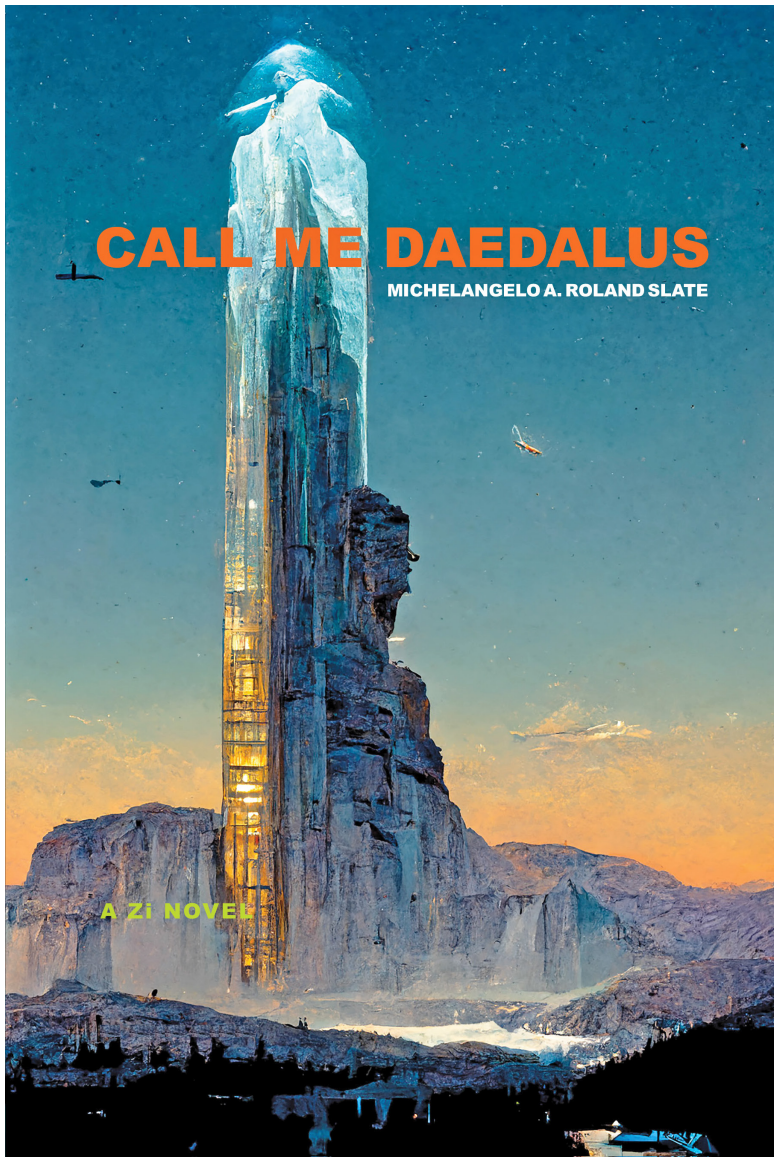
CRETE I | A vision of Daedalus 9: my dream house—like my new book *Call Me Daedalus*, inspired by the tragic yet heroic story of the mythical ancient Greek architect, inventor of the Labyrinth and Wings . . .

"We bring to our projects the architecture of ourselves." —Mikhail Bakhtin

THE ARCHITECTURE JEF7REY BRINGS TO HIS PROJECTS:

Enneagram: 4|5 · Big 5 Personality: Openness · Myers-Briggs: INFJ

Individualist · Investigator · Visionary · Intuitive · Idealist



NI + AI = ZI: ZENO INTELLIGENCE | AN EPIC GRAPHIC SCI-FI THRILLER BY MY ALTER EGO M.A.R.S.

Visionary architect Max North, aided by his AI supermentor Daedalus—the mythical architect of the Labyrinth and Wings—stakes everything on the creation of an Interplanar Place Machine. His only chance to cross the barriers that separate the HereBefore, the Here, and the HereAfter—and reunite with a loved one before time runs out.

ART IS A CHESS GAME OF FORM & STORY WAGED ON THE BATTLEFIELD OF OUR MIND AND SOUL AND HEART